

SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND WELFARE

PUBLIC HEARING, JANUARY 15, 1960

COURT HOUSE

EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA

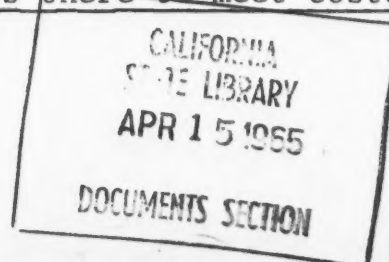
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COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Senator James A. Cobey, Chairman, Alan Short, Vice Chairman, James J. McBride, Robert I. Montgomery, Albert S. Rodda, John F. Thompson, and J. Howard Williams.

A G E N D A

FRIDAY, JANUARY 15 - 9:00 A.M.

1. CLAUDE M. FINNELL, Agricultural Commissioner, Imperial County, El Centro --- Importance of agriculture to the Desert Area, the various crops and seasons.
2. NORMAN SMITH, California Director, Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee, AFL-CIO, Stockton --- Another case study in adverse effect: California desert and border counties, 1952-1959.
3. CLIVE KNOWLES, District Representative, United Packinghouse Workers Union, Local 78, AFL-CIO --- Seasonal farm labor needs and trends in the Desert Area; Public Law 78; and domestic farm workers in the Desert Area, both local and migratory.
4. JOHN N. VEVERS, representing the Coachella Valley Farmers Association, Thermal --- Farm wages in Coachella Valley, ability of domestic workers, farm income and costs.
5. JOHN NORTON, Rancher, Blythe --- Importance of agriculture to the Blythe area and the ability of the farmers ~~there to meet costs.~~



6. DANNY DANENBERG, Rancher and Chairman, California Winter Lettuce Advisory Board, El Centro --- Factors affecting the ability of farmers to meet labor costs.
7. JOHN E. McINTYRE, Director, Riverside County Welfare Department, Riverside --- The dependence of agricultural workers on public welfare.
8. E. P. BOYDEN, Director, Imperial County Welfare Department, El Centro --- The dependence of agricultural workers on public welfare.
9. REPRESENTATIVE, Chamber of Commerce, Calexico --- The community point of view.
10. DOUGLAS M. STILL, D.D., Director, California Migrant Ministry, National Council of Churches, Los Angeles --- Living conditions and problems confronted by seasonal farm laborers.
11. DOUGLAS NANCE, Rancher, representing the Riverside County Farm Bureau, Thermal --- Domestic labor.
12. LELAND J. YOST, Rancher, representing the Desert Ranch Owners' Association, Thermal --- Farm labor problems in the Coachella Valley.
13. THOMAS L. HARRIS, Social Insurance Analyst, California Teamsters Legislative Council, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Sacramento --- The utilization of domestic farm workers in the desert area.
14. WILLIAM THORNBURG, Rancher, Holtville --- Domestic farm workers in the Desert Area.



15. KEITH METS, President, Imperial Valley Farmers Association, El Centro --- Domestic farm workers in the Desert Area.
16. RICHARD P. GIBBONS, President, and CHARLES D. THOMAS, Member, Finance Committee, Imperial County Coordinating Committee, El Centro --- The operation of the Bracero program in the Desert Area.
17. RICHARD W. PETHERBRIDGE, Attorney at Law, El Centro --- The effects of the Bracero program.
18. JAMES J. O'BRIEN, JR., representing Gabriel Giannini, Coachella Valley Rancher, Indio --- The usefulness of the Mexican National program to Coachella Valley agriculture.
19. RALPH GILBERT, Rancher, Imperial --- Mechanization in agriculture and the need for Braceros in summer employment.
20. REPRESENTATIVE, Imperial County Medical Society, El Centro --- Medical care and medical insurance programs available to Mexican Nationals in the Imperial area.
21. EDSON FIELDER, SR., President, Community Service Organization, El Centro --- Unemployment in Imperial Valley of local residents due to the use of Braceros; unrealistic low rate of pay, i.e., 75¢ per hour; effect of Bracero program on the living conditions of agricultural workers in Imperial Valley; migration of farm families and individual workers for seasonal work outside Imperial Valley, due in large part to the unavailability of work in Imperial Valley; and some abuses of the Bracero program.
22. REPRESENTATIVE, Dr. Ray W. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools, Riverside County, Riverside --- Use of school youth as farm workers, and problems that may have arisen from the influx of migratory families and the education of their children.

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OPENING STATEMENT

SENATOR JAMES A COBEY

This is the second of a series of three public hearings on farm labor problems being conducted by the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare. The first was held in Sacramento on November 16 and 17, 1959. The testimony received then contributed a great deal toward the development of foundation material on such subjects as changes in California's agriculture -- distribution of cropland harvested -- crops and crop production -- labor employment reports -- Public Law 78 -- operation of the Farm Placement Service -- wages -- and so forth. The witnesses testifying at Sacramento were mainly representatives of State and Federal agencies who have a direct connection with agriculture and agricultural labor.

Today we are concerned with the immediate problems of the farmers, the farm workers, and farm communities, and it is particularly gratifying to the committee that so many people representing these particular Desert Area groups are here to assist us in our study.

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This is a subcommittee of a seven-man committee, created by Senate Resolution 135 during the 1959 Session of the Legislature, authorized to study, among other subjects, all facts relating to all phases of farm labor problems. Today, as we explore the farm labor problems which are more or less peculiar to the "Desert Area" -- Imperial and East Riverside Counties -- we have sitting with us members of the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Agriculture, as it, too, is cognizant of this area's importance as a major contributor to California's agricultural output.

Because of our very lengthy agenda, I will be brief as to our committee's responsibilities. We will analyze the general and factual material collected and any specific current problems presented. We will do everything possible to insure a fair, objective, and impartial study -- and here may I comment that I believe each person who appears before this committee has a similar responsibility -- that of adhering to the facts and making certain those facts are as accurate as they can be. It is for this reason that we are requiring all witnesses to testify under oath. This procedure was followed at the Sacramento hearing and will also be followed at the Fresno hearings on January 26 and 27.

The committee is required to submit a final report to the Senate. It will be predicated on the analyzed evidence received and the somewhat limited research we are conducting.



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The report will include the committee's recommendations for remedial legislation, if it appears warranted, as well as proposed solutions of problems which may not require specific legislation. We will also advise the Senate of the extent to which the State's Executive Branch is following the intent of the Legislature laid down in applicable statutes.

Again, may I thank you for your interest in our endeavors and the contributions I know you will make toward our study. In choosing El Centro as the site of our second hearing we were not amiss in coming to the source for information concerning the committee's historical, economic, and social investigation of farm labor problems in California.

The members of the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare are the Vice Chairman, Senator Alan Short of Stockton, representing San Joaquin County; Senator James J. McBride of Ventura, representing Ventura County; Senator Robert I. Montgomery of Hanford, representing Kings County; Senator Albert S. Rodda of Sacramento, representing Sacramento County; Senator John F. "Jack" Thompson of San Jose, representing Santa Clara County; and Senator J. Howard Williams of Porterville, representing Tulare County. I am Senator James A. Cobey of Merced, representing Merced and Madera Counties and Chairman of the Committee. Staff members are Andrew W. Oppmann, Jr., Executive Secretary, and Ruth Boyd, Secretary.

The members of the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Agriculture are: the Chairman, Senator Paul L. Byrne of Chico, representing Butte County; the Vice Chairman Senator J. William Beard of El Centro, representing Imperial County; Senator Nathan F. Coombs of Napa, representing Napa and Yolo Counties; Senator A. A. Erhart of Arroyo Grande, representing San Luis Obispo County; Senator John J. Hollister, Jr., of Santa Barbara, representing Santa Barbara County; Senator John A. Murdy, Jr. of Santa Ana, representing Orange County; Senator Virgil O'Sullivan of Williams, representing Colusa, Glenn and Tehama Counties; Senator Joseph A. Battigan of Santa Rosa, representing Sonoma County; Senator Waverly Jack Slattery of Finley, representing Lake and Mendocino Counties; Senator Walter W. Stiern of Bakersfield, representing Kern County; and Mr. Paul K. Huff is the Executive Secretary of this Committee.



REPORT TO THE SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE  
ON LABOR AND WELFARE

Presented January, 15, 1960 at El Centro

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare. The purpose of this presentation is to acquaint you with the agricultural industry of Imperial County, by telling you the sequence of crops and their harvest dates and the acreages and value of these crops.

By noting the harvest dates, the type of crop and the acreage involved, I think you can get a better prospective of the need for farm labor. I do not intend, in this report, to propose the amount or source of labor required, but only to present the facts as they exist as to the type of agriculture we have here. You can see by looking over the reports presented that Imperial County is no longer just a Winter vegetable growing area, but that farm activity is a year round process with harvest and planting of some crops occurring in practically every month of the year.

With these opening remarks I hereby submit to this Committee a copy of the 1958 Crop Report compiled by the Agricultural Commissioner's Office and a list of major agricultural crops with the harvest dates and the planting dates. This should give the committee a basis on which to consider the complex problems which you have undertaken.

CLAUDE M. FINNELL  
AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER



PLANTING DATES -- IMPERIAL VALLEY CROPS  
Compiled by County Agricultural Department - 1960

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Cantaloupes Watermelons Tomatoes Squash Barley	Alfalfa Grapefruit Oranges Asparagus Cantaloupes Watermelons Tomatoes Squash Cotton Barley	Alfalfa Grapefruit Oranges Asparagus Cotton	Cotton Milo
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Cotton Milo	Cotton Milo	Milo	Cantaloupes Tomatoes Squash Sugar Beets
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Tomatoes Squash Lettuce Carrots Cabbage Onions Garlic Romaine Greens Sugar Beets Barley	Tomatoes Squash Lettuce Carrots Cabbage Onions Garlic Romaine Greens Sugar Beets Barley	Alfalfa Grapefruit Oranges Asparagus Cantaloupes Watermelons Tomatoes Lettuce Carrots Cabbage Onions Garlic Romaine Greens Sugar Beets Flax Barley	Alfalfa Grapefruit Oranges Asparagus Cantaloupes Watermelons Squash Lettuce Carrots Cabbage Onions Garlic Romaine Greens Sugar Beets Flax Barley

HARVESTING DATES -- IMPERIAL VALLEY CROPS  
Compiled by County Agricultural Department - 1960

JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL
Grapefruit	Grapefruit	Grapefruit	Tomatoes
Lettuce	Lettuce	Lettuce	Squash
Cotton	Carrots	Carrots	Carrots
Tomatoes	Cabbage	Cabbage	Garlic
Squash	Tomatoes	Tomatoes	Onions
Asparagus	Squash	Squash	Flax
Alfalfa	Asparagus	Asparagus	Barley
Carrots	Alfalfa	Alfalfa	Alfalfa
Cabbage	Broccoli	Broccoli	Oranges
Romaine	Oranges	Oranges	Romaine
	Romaine	Romaine	
MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST
Cantaloupes	Cantaloupes	Cantaloupes	Alfalfa
Watermelons	Watermelons	Watermelons	Milo Maize
Tomatoes	Barley	Flax	Cotton
Squash	Tomatoes	Alfalfa	
Sugar Beets	Sugar Beets	Milo Maize	
Flax	Flax	Sorghums	
Barley	Alfalfa	Onions	
Onions	Onions	Tomatoes	
Carrots	Garlic	Alfalfa	
Garlic			
SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Alfalfa	Cantaloupes	Grapefruit	Grapefruit
Milo Maize	Asparagus	Tomatoes	Carrots
Cotton	Squash	Squash	Tomatoes
Cantaloupes	Alfalfa	Asparagus	Squash
	Cotton	Cotton	Alfalfa
			Cotton
			Lettuce

# Agricultural Crop Report

County of Imperial

1958



Office of the

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER



## **AGRICULTURAL CROP REPORT - 1958**

TO: THE HONORABLE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

and

W. C. JACOBSEN, Director of Agriculture

I herewith submit the annual report on the value of agricultural production in the County of Imperial for 1958 as required in Section 65.5 of the Agricultural Code.

The 1958 crop report, while indicating a gross value of \$130,837,346.00 as compared to a value of \$147,129,118.00 for 1957, is actually the highest gross value ever produced in Imperial County. For comparative values of other years, refer to the seven year comparative chart in this report. The reason for the apparent decrease in value is due to the deletion of certain items to make this report more nearly conform to the Federal-State reporting system.

The gross income represented in this report is based on the F.O.B. value of the commodities. It does not take into consideration harvesting, packing and other costs of producing and marketing, and is not intended to reflect net profit to the farmer.

This office is sincerely grateful to all those who helped to make this report possible by supplying factual information.

Respectfully submitted,

*Charles M. Finnell*

Agricultural Commissioner

Imperial County



IMPERIAL COUNTY BOARD  
OF SUPERVISORS

1958



EARL CAVANAH, Chairman

J. R. SNYDER

SI CAREY

THOMAS J. BOLEY

PAUL GILLET



## LIVESTOCK AND LIVESTOCK PRODUCTS

Cattle .....	316,036 Head .....	\$22,122,520.00
Sheep .....	228,282 Head .....	4,711,653.00
Hogs .....	12,402 Head .....	350,993.00
Wool .....	598,128 Pounds .....	350,101.00
Fertilizer .....	.....	373,280.00
Turkeys .....	1,200 Head .....	5,400.00
Poultry .....	95,000 Head .....	50,750.00
Eggs .....	21,604 Cases .....	248,446.00
Market Milk .....	24,900,776 Pounds .....	1,226,763.00
Manufacture Milk .....	5,665,187 Pounds .....	186,011.00
Bees Wax .....	52,000 Pounds .....	23,400.00
Honey .....	3,120,000 Pounds .....	257,400.00
Pollinization .....	6,000 Colonies .....	18,000.00
Value .....		\$29,924,717.00

## MELONS

Cantaloupes .....	324,572 Crates .....	\$ 1,622,860.00
Miscellaneous Melons .....	205 Tons .....	10,250.00
Watermelons .....	20,457 Tons .....	1,575,189.00
Value .....		\$ 3,208,299.00

## FRUITS AND NUTS

Grapefruit .....	185,846 Boxes .....	\$ 232,307.00
Oranges (Valencia) .....	61,178 Boxes .....	122,356.00
Tangerines .....	22,563 Lugs .....	93,636.00
Lemons .....	6,167 Boxes .....	21,584.00
Dates .....	420,000 Pounds .....	84,000.00
Pecans .....	18,900 Pounds .....	9,450.00
Grapes .....	15,130 Lugs .....	45,390.00
Value .....		\$ 608,723.00

## FIELD AND FORAGE CROPS

Cotton .....	122,068 Bales .....	\$20,385,356.00
Cotton Seed (Not Planting) .....	45,420 Tons .....	1,907,640.00
Flax .....	1,399,800 Bushels .....	4,507,356.00
Flax Straw .....	16,884 Tons .....	217,095.00
Barley .....	161,869 Tons .....	7,348,852.00
Milo Maize .....	21,671 Tons .....	1,018,537.00
Sorghums .....	14,740 Tons .....	88,440.00
Sugar Beets .....	1,122,300 Tons .....	14,028,750.00
Castor Beans .....	231,436 Pounds .....	12,729.00
Straw (Grain) .....	53,956 Tons .....	647,472.00
Alfalfa (Hay) .....	482,021 Tons .....	11,460,820.00
Alfalfa (Meal & Pellets) .....	29,343 Tons .....	1,349,778.00
Alfalfa (Green Chop) .....	20,000 Tons .....	100,000.00
Sudan Grass .....	.....	49,536.00
Pasturage .....	.....	2,033,337.00
Value .....		\$65,155,698.00

## SEED

### Certified Seed:

Alfalfa—Moapa .....	122,367 Pounds .....	\$ 67,301.00
Alfalfa—Africa .....	53,125 Pounds .....	13,812.00
Barley—Calif. Mariout .....	3,290,897 Pounds .....	139,863.00
Flax—Imperial .....	844,991 Pounds .....	92,949.00
Millet—Star .....	14,000 Pounds .....	1,400.00
Sorghum—Brawley .....	2,000 Pounds .....	200.00
Wheat—Ramona 50 .....	718,537 Pounds .....	37,723.00
Value .....		\$ 353,248.00

### Non-Certified Seed:

Alfalfa .....	6,714,909 Pounds .....	\$ 1,477,279.00
Barley .....	6,886,755 Pounds .....	265,140.00
Clover .....	1,077,640 Pounds .....	107,764.00
Cotton (Planting) .....	3,407 Tons .....	603,039.00
Flax (Planting) .....	2,521,221 Pounds .....	239,515.00
Flower .....	2,500 Pounds .....	5,000.00
Lettuce .....	71,861 Pounds .....	71,861.00
Oat .....	389,280 Pounds .....	17,517.00
Onion .....	247,749 Pounds .....	222,974.00
Sesbania .....	46,011 Pounds .....	2,852.00
Sorghums .....	1,077,290 Pounds .....	56,019.00
Vegetables (Misc.) .....	62,400 Pounds .....	46,800.00
Cut Flowers .....	6,577 Cans .....	17,757.00
Value .....		\$ 3,133,517.00

## VEGETABLE CROPS

Asparagus .....	85,000 Crates .....	\$ 488,750.00
Beans (Fava) .....	12,000 Crates .....	21,000.00
Broccoli .....	78,400 Crates .....	176,400.00
Cabbage .....	95,699 Crates .....	191,398.00
Cabbage (Bulk) .....	292 Tons .....	7,008.00
Carrots .....	1,133,088 Crates .....	2,900,705.00
Carrots (Bulk) .....	12,752 Tons .....	414,440.00
Corn .....	14,699 Crates .....	36,747.00
Cucumbers .....	61,703 Lugs .....	105,509.00
Egg Plant .....	21,188 Crates .....	28,603.00
Garlic .....	1,801 Tons .....	252,140.00
Lettuce .....	12,191,647 Crates .....	17,068,305.00
Mustard Greens .....	23,800 Crates .....	65,450.00
Onions .....	239,637 Sacks .....	287,564.00
Onions (Dehydrating) .....	6,764 Tons .....	169,100.00
Okra .....	400,000 Pounds .....	52,000.00
Peas .....	4,313 Crates .....	10,351.00
Romaine .....	32,000 Crates .....	38,400.00
Squash .....	352,770 Crates .....	757,796.00
Tomatoes .....	1,638,431 Crates .....	4,607,945.00
Tomatoes (Cannery) .....	1,430 Tons .....	50,050.00
Yams .....	2,100 Crates .....	12,810.00

Value ..... \$27,742,471.00

Year	Vegetable Crops	Field and Forage	Livestock & Livestock Products	Fruits & Nuts	Melons	Seed	Soil Payments	TOTAL*
1952	\$32,435,136	59,789,286	24,427,113	869,500	7,328,410	1,194,452	186,830	\$126,230,727
1953	\$27,022,306	57,592,648	23,177,481	937,377	11,471,980	1,151,600	157,037	\$121,510,429
1954	\$26,327,053	60,695,395	24,799,855	679,448	7,779,672	3,276,011	112,979	\$123,670,413
1955	\$27,758,333	56,740,727	25,575,612	676,146	4,262,525	3,875,716	176,530	\$119,065,589
1956	\$26,436,856	53,783,515	25,285,928	476,708	5,227,676	3,327,374	272,000	\$114,810,057
1957	\$27,313,754	61,444,157	34,880,446	575,236	3,344,711	2,848,873	410,000	\$130,817,177
1958	\$27,742,471	65,155,698	29,924,717	608,723	3,208,299	3,486,765	710,673	\$130,837,346

\* Includes Government Payments

## RECAPITULATION

Vegetable Crops .....	\$ 27,742,471
Field and Forage .....	\$ 65,155,698
Livestock and Livestock Products .....	\$ 29,924,717
Fruits and Nuts .....	\$ 608,723
Melons .....	\$ 3,208,299
Seed .....	\$ 3,486,765
Soil Payments .....	\$ 710,673

TOTAL ..... \$130,837,346



# **IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT** **REPORT OF CROPS GROWN — 1958**

FIELD CROPS	Acres	VEGETABLE CROPS	Acres
Alfalfa .....	135,896	Beans .....	82
Alfalfa Seed .....	447	Bell Peppers .....	48
Barley .....	109,913	Broccoli .....	489
Bermuda .....	694	Cabbage .....	1,370
Castor Beans .....	323	Cantaloupes .....	5,487
Clover .....	1,386	Carrots .....	3,609
Clover Seed .....	250	Cucumbers .....	243
Cotton .....	46,904	Egg Plant .....	72
Field Corn .....	188	Fava Beans .....	68
Flax .....	40,163	Garlic .....	457
Flowers (mixed) .....	31	Horse Beans .....	49
Hegari .....	120	Lettuce .....	32,443
Milo .....	15,241	Lettuce Seed .....	221
Oats .....	1,740	Melons (mixed) .....	39
Pasture .....	359	Mustard .....	111
Sorghum .....	617	Okra .....	39
Sesbania .....	1,802	Onions .....	1,888
Star Millet .....	38	Onion Seed .....	253
Sudan .....	4,128	Romaine .....	80
Sugar Beets .....	49,880	Squash .....	931
Wheat .....	1,131	Sweet Potatoes .....	40
Wild Millet .....	200	Table Beets .....	46
Misc. Crops .....	58	Tomatoes .....	4,162
Safflower .....	80	Watermelons .....	3,576
Stock .....	12	Mixed Vegetables .....	107
Total .....	411,601	Total .....	55,910

## **PERMANENT CROPS**

Asparagus .....	1,492
Citrus (mixed) .....	225
Dates .....	118
Grapefruit .....	854
Grapes .....	60
Lemons .....	115
Nursery .....	15
Oranges .....	317
Pecans .....	97
Tangerines .....	246
Total .....	3,539

TOTAL .....471,050



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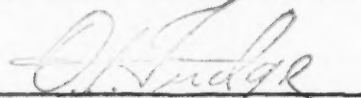
## I - CROP SURVEYS

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II - SUMMARY OF AREAS SERVED

<u>Gross Area In:</u>	<u>Acres</u>
Field Crops	650 455
Garden Crops	77 093
Permanent Crops	3 870
TOTAL GROSS AREA IN CROPS	<u>731 418</u>
Area Being Reclaimed	5 142
	<u>736 560</u>
Less Duplicate Areas	239 638
NET AREA IRRIGATED	<u>496 922</u>
 Area of Farms in Feed Lots, Homes, Corrals, Etc.	13 302
Area in Cities, Towns, Airports	10 554
TOTAL AREA RECEIVING WATER	<u>520 778</u>
 Area in Rivers, Canals, Drains, Roads, Railroads	61 541
Area Below -230 Salton Sea Reserve Boundary and Area Covered by Salton Sea	42 000
Undeveloped Area of Imperial, West Mesa, East Mesa and Pilot Knob Mesa	<u>282 990</u>
 TOTAL WITHIN I.I.D. BOUNDARY	<u>907 309</u>

IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT

  
O. L. FUDGE, General  
Superintendent of Water

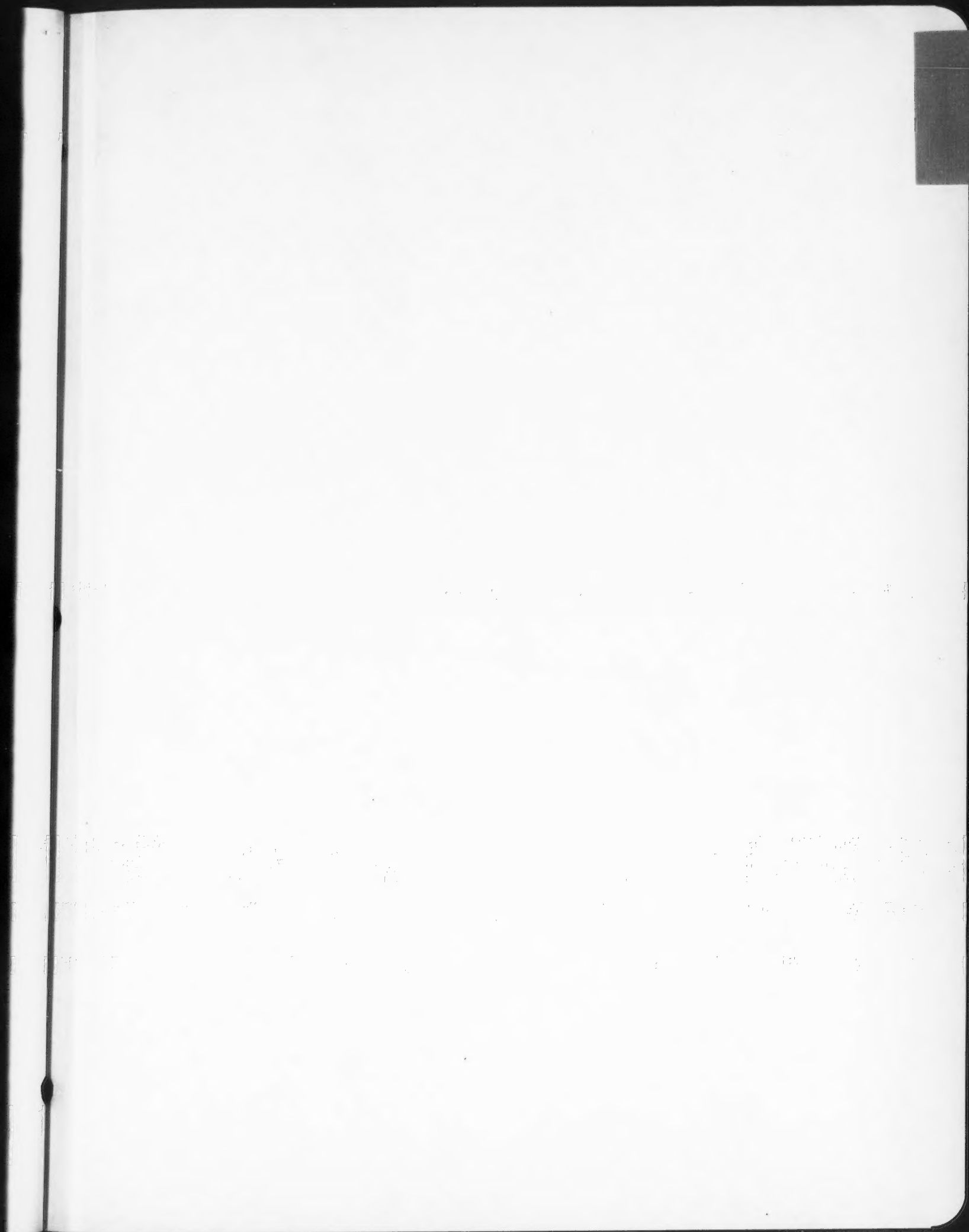


IMPERIAL IRRIGATION DISTRICT  
REPORT OF CROPS GROWING  
DECEMBER 15, 1959

<u>FIELD CROPS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>	<u>GARDEN CROPS</u>	<u>ACRES</u>
Alfalfa	158 074	Bell Peppers	2
Alfalfa (Seed)	40	Broccoli	501
Barley	28 296	Cabbage	2 621
Bermuda	879	Cantaloupes	2 708
Castor Beans	30	Carrots	5 310
Clover	1 008	Cauliflower	22
Cotton	33 362	Cauliflower (Seed)	4
Faba Beans	75	Celery	4
Flax	7 626	Cucumbers	8
Flowers (Mixed)	62	Egg Plant	53
Millet	895	Endive	88
Milo	809	Garlic	1 052
Oats	1 597	Herbs (Mixed)	5
Pasture	640	Lettuce	40 508
Stock (Nursery)	1	Lettuce (Romaine)	56
Sudan	255	Mustard	70
Sugar Beets	48 083	Nutmeg	116
Wheat	582	Okra	34
TOTAL	282 314	Onions	3 100
		Onions (Seed)	12
		Parsley	4
		Peas (English)	36
		Potatoes	5
		Radishes	7
		Rapini	15
		Squash	1 269
		Sweet Potatoes	10
		Table Beets	38
		Tomatoes	2 694
		Vegetables (Mixed)	76
		Watermelons	1 386
		TOTAL	61 814
		GRAND TOTAL	350 151

<u>PERMANENT CROPS</u>	
Asparagus	3 844
Citrus	191
Dates	105
Grapes	60
Grapefruit	787
Lemons	166
Oranges	513
Pecans	94
Tangerines	263
TOTAL	6 023

Average number of farms reported 6 081  
Average number owner operated (54.04%) 3 286  
Average number tenant operated (45.96%) 2 795



# AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS

GEORGE MEANY  
President

WM. F. SCHMITZLER  
Secretary-Treasurer

JOHN W. LIVINGSTON  
Director of Organization



## AGRICULTURAL WORKERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

NORMAN SMITH, California Director

805 EAST WEBER AVENUE  
STOCKTON 3, CALIFORNIA

HOward 6-0384



### ANOTHER CASE STUDY IN ADVERSE EFFECT: CALIFORNIA DESERT AND BORDER COUNTIES, 1952-1959

#### I. Introduction

On October 5, 1959, the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee issued a research paper which analyzed agricultural wage trends in the Sacramento Valley, 1952-1959, and non-agricultural wages in the same area during the same period of time. We found that the hourly wages of nonsupervisory industrial workers had increased 49%; weekly wages had increased 52%. In farm wages, considerable variation was noted. Almond harvesting in Tehama County, for example, paid 31% more in 1959 than in 1952 (presumably because it had become mechanized). On the other hand, crop-area-activities were found in which wages had declined as much as 21%. Taking the average of 17 crop-area-activities, we found that the composite agricultural wage rate in the Sacramento Valley had apparently declined by 2% during this period in which industrial wages in the same geographical area had increased by approximately 50%.

In our research paper #8 we raised the question of how one might account for these startling disparities in wage trends. We discovered that the evidence could not support the three arguments most commonly heard: (1) the perishability of agricultural commodities; (2) competition from low-wage States; or (3) falling farm prices. We noted, however, that the use of Mexican Nationals has increased as much as 632.7% in the Sacramento Valley counties since 1952, and we noted that as much as 97.6% of the work in some crop-area-activities has been done by braceros in recent years. We were forced to the conclusion that two factors, above all else, accounted for the wage freeze, or wage decline, in Sacramento Valley agriculture, while wages in other Sacramento Valley industries were moving rapidly into upper ground: (1) the existence of Public Law 78, per se; (2) the looseness of the manner in which Public Law 78 has been administered. We advisedly termed this process "adverse effect," and noted that such adverse effect is against the law.

The present analysis should be considered a companion piece to AWOC Research Paper #8. We do not propose here to restate fully the lines of our analysis in the earlier paper. We propose merely to apply the earlier method to a different geographical area, to see if it yields the same sorts of results.

We shall here consider the Desert and Border Counties of California: San Diego, Imperial, and East Riverside. For reasons which will become apparent as the analysis proceeds, it seems appropriate to treat these areas as a unit, for purposes of agricultural labor research.

#### II. Agricultural Wages

Wage rates in 29 different crop-area-activities are reviewed in this section. These particular crops were selected, first, for their importance within the area, and, second, because wage information is available from 1952 to 1959, in

comparable forms. A number of major crop-activities, such as the grape harvest in the Borrego Springs area, had to be omitted because they changed from a piece rate to hourly payment during the study period. Other crop-activities which are now major--such as dry onions in Imperial County--could not be included since they were of minor importance six or seven years ago, and hence were not reported by the State Farm Placement Service at that time. Taken all in all, we believe the 29 crop-area-activities for which we have been able to obtain information yield a meaningful impression of farm wage developments in the Desert and Border Counties during the past eight years.

Table 1 shows, first of all, that in Imperial County--the most important of the three counties, agriculturally--many crop-activities have been paid at precisely the same rate throughout the entire 1952-1959 period: 70¢ per hour. The same is true of many crop-activities we do not have space to show, including <sup>some</sup> such as irrigating and lettuce field-packing, which are highly skilled.

Table I

Hourly Wage Rates, Five Major Crop Activities, Imperial County, 1952-1959								
	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Sugar beets: Thin, hoe	\$ .70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70
Tomatoes: Pick, pack	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70
Miscellaneous vegetables: Plant, cultivate, harvest	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70
Lettuce: Thin, hoe	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70
Tomatoes: Hoe	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70	.70

Source: California Department of Employment, Division of Research and Statistics, 881-A Reports, 1952-1959

Much the same pattern that we observed in Table 1 also holds true in San Diego County, as may be seen in Table 2. Here, however, while 70¢ per hour remains a floor throughout the entire period, the ceiling was raised to 75¢ per hour in 1953. It has remained at that figure ever since.



Table 2

Hourly Wage Rates  
Three Major Crop Activities, San Diego County  
1952-1959

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Tomatoes: Plant, cultivate, harvest	.70	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75
Strawberries: Harvest	.70	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75
Misc. Vegetables: Plant, cultivate, Harvest	.70	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75	.70-.75

Source: Same as Table 1

Table 3 indicates wage trends in three different citrus crops in the region we are studying. It will be noted that wages in two of the three have declined.

Table 3

Citrus Harvesting Rates  
East Riverside and San Diego Counties  
1952-1959

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
East Riverside Grapefruit (per hour)	.70- .90	NA	.70	.70	.75	.75	.75	.75
San Diego Lemons (per box)	NA	.34	.34	.34	.34	.34	.30	.30
San Diego Valencia Oranges (per box)	.13	.13	.13	.13	.13	.13	.145- .15	.15

NA: Not available

Source: Same as Table 1

Tables 4 and 5 deal with melon harvesting wage rates in Imperial and East Riverside Counties. While the Imperial County rates have remained stationary, or virtually stationary, since 1952, those in East Riverside County have declined substantially.



Table 4

Cantaloupe Harvesting Rates  
Imperial and East Riverside Counties  
1952-1959

	Rate per 80# Crate							
	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Imperial County	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25	\$.25
E. Riverside County	.22	.24	.22	.22	NA	NA	NA	.09-.22 plus .01-.02 bonus

NA: Not available  
Source: Same as Table 1

Table 5

Watermelon Harvesting Rates  
Imperial and East Riverside Counties  
1952-1959

	Pick-pitch rate, per ton							
	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Imperial County	\$2.25	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.50	\$2.25	\$2.25	\$2.50
E. Riverside County	5.00	NA	2.50	2.50	NA	NA	2.50	2.50

NA: Not available  
Source: Same as Table 1

Tables 6 and 7 have to do with cotton chopping and picking rates in Imperial and East Riverside Counties. While the rates for first picking were the same in 1959 that they were in 1952 -- \$3.00 per hundredweight in both counties -- rates for second and third picking have fallen significantly. The piece rate for cotton chopping in East Riverside was the same in 1959 that it was in 1952; the hourly rate for this crop-activity in Imperial County dropped somewhat in the same period.

Table 6

Cotton Harvesting Rates (Per 100 pounds)  
Imperial and East Riverside Counties  
1952-1959

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Imperial County 1st picking	\$3.00	\$3.00	\$2.50	\$2.50- 3.00	\$2.50- 3.00	\$2.50	\$3.00	\$3.00
Imperial County 2nd and 3rd pickings	3.50- 4.00	3.50- 4.00	2.50- 3.00	2.50- 3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
East Riverside County 1st picking	3.00	3.00	2.50	2.50	2.50	2.50	3.00	3.00
East Riverside County 2nd and 3rd pickings	3.00 4.00	3.00 3.50	3.00	2.50	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00

Source: Same as Table 1

Table 7

Wage Rates  
Cotton Chopping and Hoeing  
Imperial and East Riverside Counties  
1952-1959

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Imperial County (per hour)	\$.70- .85	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70	\$.70
East Riverside County (Per acre)	3.00	NA	3.00	3.00	NA	NA	NA	3.00

NA: Not available

Source: Same as Table 1

Table 8 indicates the wage trends in hay and grain harvesting, Imperial and East Riverside Counties, 1952-1959. These rates are considerably higher than the others we have been discussing because these crop-activities are, of course, mechanized. It will be seen from Table 8 that there has been little if any change in these wage-rates during the eight year period under examination.

Hay and Grain Harvesting Rates  
Imperial and East Riverside Counties  
1952-1959

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Imperial County, Alfalfa	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.00- 1.25	\$ .85- 1.25	\$ .85- 1.50	\$1.25	\$1.25	\$1.25
Imperial County, Small grain	1.25- 1.50	1.00- 1.25	1.00- 1.50	1.30- 1.50	1.30- 1.50	1.30- 1.50	1.30- 1.50	1.30- 1.50
East Riverside Co., Alfalfa	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00

Source: Same as Table 1

Finally, Table 9 shows us the wage trends in five assorted crop-activities in Imperial, East Riverside, and San Diego Counties. In two of the five, the most common wage rate has gone up since 1952; in three of the five, the rate has gone down.

Table 9

Most Common Wage Rates, Major Crop Activities  
Imperial, East Riverside, and San Diego Counties  
1952-1959

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
Imperial County: Carrots, pull-tie	.25/56 bnchs.	.25/36 bnchs.	.48/72 bnchs.	.08/12 bnchs.	.48/72 bnchs.	.08/12 bnchs.	.08/12 bnchs.	.08/12 bnchs.
East Riverside County: Date harvest, per lb.	.01- .015	.01- .02	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	.01
San Diego County: avo- cado harvest, per hr.	.75- 1.00	.75- 1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
San Diego County: celery harvest, per hour	.70- .80	.70- .75	.70- .75	.70- .75	.70- .75	.70- .75	.70- .75	.70- .75
San Diego County: Vineyard pruning	.70- .80	.70- .75	NA	.70- .75	.70- .75	.75- .85	.75- 1.00	.75- 1.00

NA: Not available

Source: Same as Table 1

One can appreciate at a glance the farm wage trends in the Desert Border region by translating the above hourly and piece rates into series of index numbers, using 1952 as the base and assigning it a weight of 100.0 in each case. By combining all 29 index numbers into a single unweighted average, we arrive at a composite wage rate which provides a convenient short-hand summary of farm wage tendencies in this part of California during the past eight years.

The individual series of index numbers show us that wages increased in eight crop-area-activities, declined in ten cases, and were unchanged in eleven cases. The composite farm wage index reveals that agricultural wages in the Desert-Border zone underwent an over-all decline of 3.2% during the 1952-1959 period. Individual and composite farm wage indices may be found in Table 10. The eight year trend in the composite rate may be found in graphical form, in Figure 1.

Table 10

Farm Wage Rates, Imperial, East Riverside and San Diego Counties  
1952-1959, as percent of 1952 rates, with composite rate of 29 crop activities

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
<u>Imperial County</u>								
sugar beets, thin, hoe	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
tomatoes, hoe	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
tomatoes, pick, pack	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
lettuce, thin, hoe	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
misc. vegetables, plant								
cult., harvest	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
cotton, 1st picking	100.0	100.0	83.3	91.7	91.7	83.3	100.0	100.0
cotton, 2nd and 3rd pick.	100.0	100.0	73.3	73.3	80.0	80.0	80.0	80.0
antelope, harvest	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
alfalfa, hay, harvest	100.0	100.0	90.0	84.0	84.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
fall grain, harvest	100.0	81.3	90.9	101.3	101.3	101.3	101.3	101.3
potato, pull-tie	100.0	100.0	95.9	95.9	95.9	95.9	95.9	95.9
potato, chop-hoe	100.0	90.3	90.3	90.3	90.3	90.3	90.3	90.3
strawberry, harvest	100.0	111.1	111.1	111.1	111.1	100.0	100.0	111.1
<u>East Riverside County</u>								
potato, harvest	100.0	120.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	80.0
alfalfa hay, harvest	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
peach, harvest	100.0	NA	87.5	87.5	93.7	93.7	93.7	93.7
antelope, harvest	100.0	91.7	100.0	100.0	NA	NA	NA	77.5
cotton, 1st picking	100.0	100.0	33.3	33.3	85.3	85.3	100.0	100.0
cotton, 2nd & 3rd pick.	100.0	92.9	85.7	71.4	85.7	85.7	85.7	85.7
strawberry, harvest	100.0	NA	50.0	50.0	NA	NA	50.0	50.0
cotton, chop-hoe	100.0	NA	100.0	100.0	NA	NA	NA	100.0
<u>San Diego County</u>								
strawberry, harvest	100.0	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6
tomato, plant, cultivate								
harvest	100.0	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6
misc. vegetables, plant,								
cult., harvest	100.0	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6	103.6
avocado, harvest	100.0	114.3	114.3	114.3	114.3	114.3	114.3	114.3
lemon, harvest	NA	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	88.2	88.2
valencia oranges, harvest	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	113.5	113.5
celery, cut-pack	100.0	96.7	96.7	96.7	96.7	96.7	96.7	96.7
garland, prune	100.0	96.7	NA	96.7	96.7	106.7	116.7	116.7
Composite Rate	100.0	100.2	94.9	94.9	97.8	97.7	97.6	96.0

NA: Not available

Source: Same as Table 1



### III. Non-Agricultural Wages

The California Department of Industrial Relations collects and disseminates statistics on wages in non-agricultural industries classified by metropolitan region. The nearest such region to the Desert-Border Counties is San Diego. Table 11 and Figure 2 indicate the trend in wages of non-supervisory manufacturing workers in the San Diego Metropolitan Area, 1952-1959.

Table 11

Average Hourly and Weekly Earnings of Production and Related Workers in Manufacturing, San Diego Metropolitan Area  
1952-1959

Year	Average Hourly Earnings	Average Weekly Earnings
1952	\$1.81	\$70.69
1953	\$1.94	76.14
1954	2.05	81.77
1955	2.14	85.91
1956	2.24	93.02
1957	2.28	92.22
1958	2.58	107.66
1959	2.66	107.73

NOTE: All data are as of July 1, with the exception of 1959, in which October 1 data have been used.

SOURCE: State of California, Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor Statistics and Research, "California Labor Statistics Bulletin Area Supplement," 1952-1959 issues.

We have translated average weekly earnings in manufacturing in San Diego County into a series of index numbers, which may be found in Table 12. Comparison with the composite farm wage rate in Table 10 is instructive. Such comparison reveals that during the same period that agricultural wages declined, on the average, 3.2%, wages in other industries increased, on the average, 52.4%.

Table 12

Index of Average Weekly Earnings,  
Non-Supervisory Manufacturing Workers,  
San Diego Metropolitan Area, 1952-1959.

Year	Index (1952 = 100)
1952	100.0
1953	107.7
1954	115.7
1955	121.5
1956	131.6
1957	130.5
1958	152.3
1959	152.4

NOTE: All data are as of July 1, with exception of 1959, in which October 1 data have been used.

SOURCE: Same as Table 11



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Figure 1  
COMPOSITE FARM WAGE INDEX, IMPERIAL, EAST RIVERSIDE,  
AND SAN DIEGO COUNTIES, 1952-1959

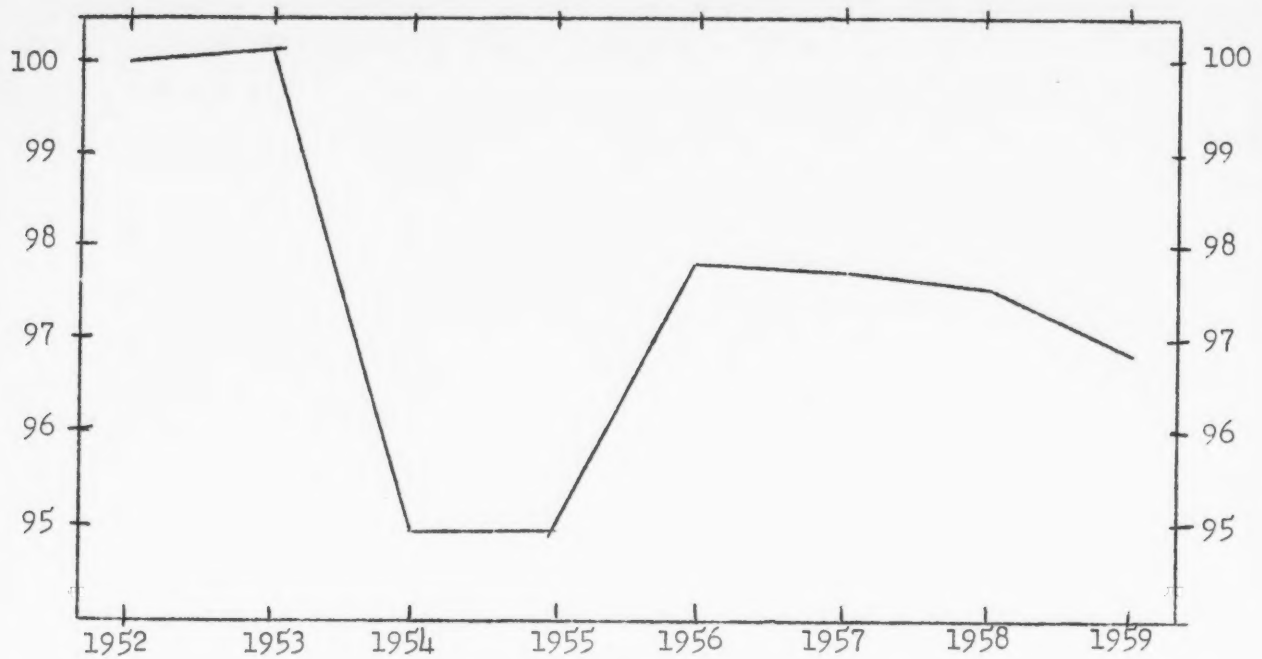
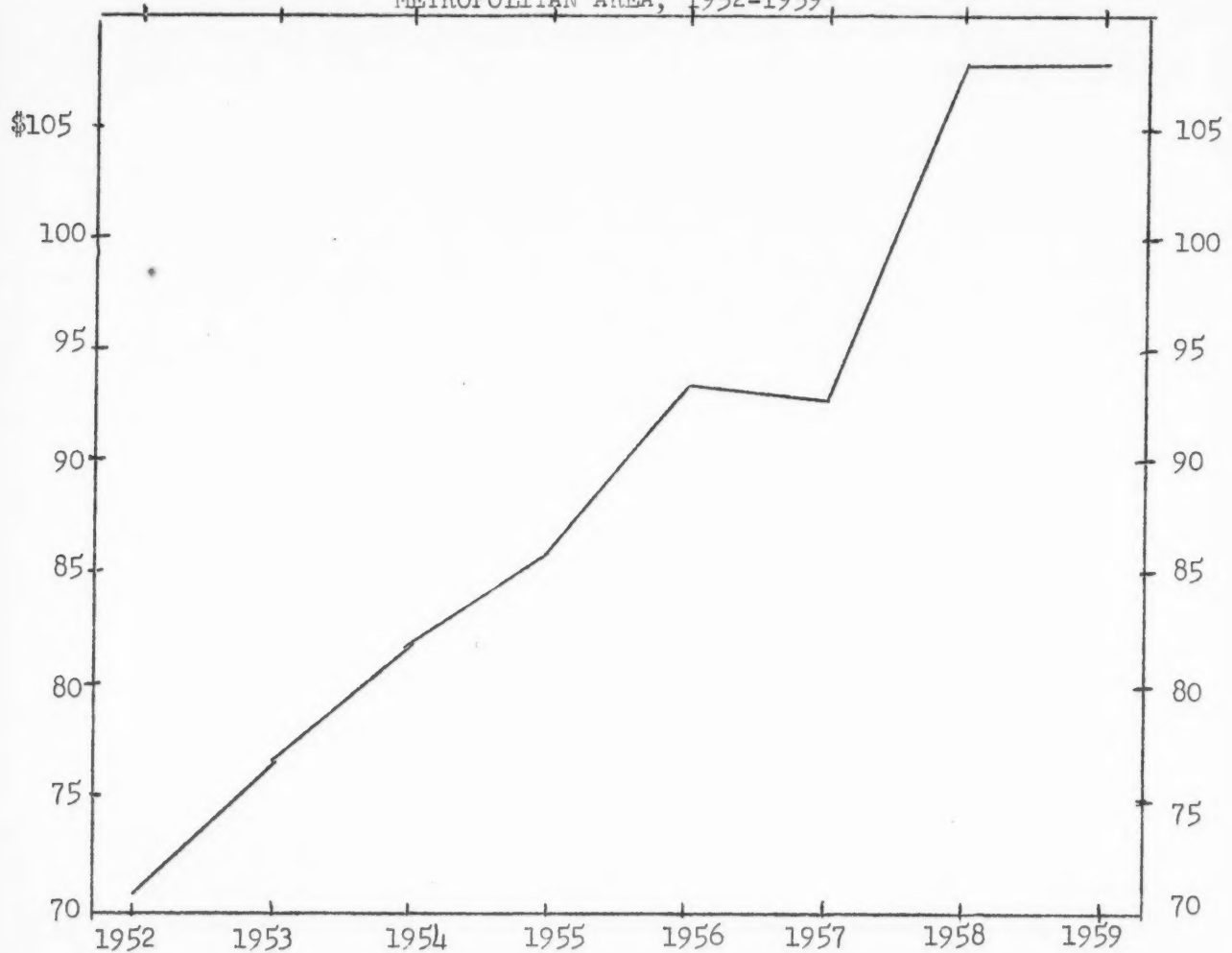


Figure 2  
AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS, NONSUPERVISORY WORKERS IN MANUFACTURING, SAN DIEGO  
METROPOLITAN AREA, 1952-1959



If, as seems reasonable, we assume the average agricultural wage in the Desert-Border Counties to have been approximately 75¢ per hour during the eight years under investigation, we may calculate agricultural wages as a percent of manufacturing wages, with the results to be seen in Table 13 and Figure 3.

Table 13  
Agricultural Wages in Desert-Border Region  
Expressed as Percentage of Manufacturing Wages in San Diego County  
1952-1959

<u>Year</u>	<u>Farm Wages as Percent of Manufacturing Wages</u>
1952	41.5
1953	38.7
1954	36.6
1955	35.0
1956	33.0
1957	32.9
1958	29.1
1959	28.6

SOURCES: California Department of Employment, Farm Placement Service, "Weekly Farm Report," 1952-1959 issues; California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor Statistics and Research, "California Labor Statistics Bulletin, Area Supplement," 1952-1959 issues.

In other words, the gap between agricultural wages and non-agricultural wages in this part of California (as in the remainder of the State, and throughout the nation) has been constantly widening. Eight years ago, farm wages were slightly more than two-fifths of non-farm wages in the border area; today they are only slightly more than one-fourth, and give every indication of continuing to fall farther behind.

#### IV. Foreign Contract Labor

The period we have been studying comprises the eight full years in which Public Law 78 has been in effect. In most parts of the State, this is the only meaningful period of time over which to study the effects of foreign contract labor, since relatively few such workers were imported prior to the Fall of 1951. It should be borne in mind throughout the following discussion, however, that the Desert-Border area is unique among California regions in that it employed appreciable numbers of Mexican Nationals even during the interregnum between the end of World War II and the commencement of the bracero program as we know it today. What is more, the Desert-Border area may be distinguished in degree if not in kind from other prime agricultural regions of California in the extent of its reliance on "wetback" labor in the years prior to the Border Patrol's renaissance in 1954. In a monograph entitled "The Wetback Strike," Dr. Ernesto Galarza reports that at the time the National Farm Labor Union, AFL (now National Agricultural Workers Union, AFL-CIO) was trying to organize cantaloupe crews in the late spring of 1951, the farm labor force of the Imperial Valley was comprised of approximately 5,000 domestics, 5,000 braceros, and 5,000 "wetbacks."

This background, no doubt, explains why, at the inception of Public Law 78, farm wages in the Desert-Border region were the lowest on the Pacific Coast.

It remains for us to attempt to understand why farm wages have declined, in balance, even from this depressed starting point, despite the fact that the wetback traffic has been largely eliminated, and despite the fact that wages in non-farm labor markets have risen sharply. On the face of it, one might suppose that growers in the Coachella Valley, Palo Verde Valley, Imperial Valley, and San Diego coastal plain would have had to make some upward adjustments in order to obtain workers at a time when manufacturing wages were rising from \$1.81 per hour to an average of \$2.66 per hour. A corresponding rise, proportionally, would have sent agricultural wages to approximately \$1.10 or \$1.15 per hour, from their starting point of approximately 75¢ per hour. However, nothing of the sort has happened.

Why? Because growers in this three-county area have been able to obtain alien contract laborers "at the prevailing rate." Growers in other parts of the country, of course, have had the same opportunity, and many in areas such as the Salinas Valley and San Joaquin County have taken full advantage of this opportunity. But agricultural employers in the Desert-Border region have had advantages even beyond those afforded other growers by the Mexican National system. Being close to the source of bracero supply (i.e., the El Centro Reception Center), Desert-Border growers have minimal transportation expenses. Their proximity to the border also enables growers in this region to make greater use of "specials" -- at least, during periods when the U.S. and Mexican governments tolerate this system. The year-around growing season in the Desert-Border area permits the use of braceros for the full eighteen consecutive months allowed by the International Agreement.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, agricultural employers in San Diego, Imperial, and East Riverside Counties are tightly organized, in a manner which can only be envied by growers in the remainder of California. In the Coachella Valley, every major grower and most smaller ones are members of the Coachella Valley Farmers Association. In San Diego County, every major grower is a member of San Diego County Farmers, Incorporated. In Imperial County, until 1956, all major agricultural employers were members of the Imperial Valley Farmers Association. In that year, a second, smaller association was organized by a former compliance officer of the U.S. Department of Labor. We understand that this second association is in the process of being dissolved for its poor compliance record, which will restore the Imperial Valley Farmers Association to its unchallenged position. In any event, there was never a semblance of competition between the two associations on a matter of importance such as wage rates.

Which brings us to the basic point: the very reason for the existence of associations such as those we have mentioned is the elimination of competition between growers for labor. Associations themselves would probably call this "stabilizing farm labor relations." What it really means is that every important farm labor user in San Diego, Imperial, and East Riverside Counties has had delivered to him, by his association, all the labor he claimed he could use, at the same price, year after year.

What kind of labor? Let us examine the articles under which San Diego County Farmers, Inc., like other such associations, is incorporated by the General Non-Profit Corporation Law of California. We find the following "specific and primary purposes":

- (a) To obtain, recruit, provide, place, import, transport, manage, hire, rotate, contract for, handle, establish methods for acquiring, and generally to deal with farm and agricultural labor for its members and others engaged in the growing, harvesting, processing, handling and preparing for market, of farm, dairy, fruit, livestock and other agricultural and floricultural products.
- (b) To contract with any Federal, State, Governmental or private agency, organization, association or individual for the purpose of obtaining or assisting its members and others in obtaining farm and agricultural labor and to guarantee the performance of labor contracts by its members.

This language sounds as though the association exists for the purpose of providing its user-members with various types of farm labor. However, the Cooperative Employment Agreement, which prospective user-members must sign upon joining San Diego County Farmers, Incorporated, contains somewhat clearer references to the purposes of the organization.

WHEREAS, the Association and the Employer wish to cooperate in making agricultural workers available to alleviate the present shortage of agricultural workers in this area.

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the undertakings hereinafter stated, the Association and the Employer agree as follows:

I. The Employers shall employ, upon the following terms, those agricultural workers who have been contracted for by the Association and to furnish employment for such workers.

1. The duration of this contract for each of the workers shall be for approximately six months; it can be subject to renewal for all or part of the workers.\*\*\*

2. ...The workers shall be employed exclusively in agricultural work on the ranch of the Employer, or on ranches of growers who are members in good standing with San Diego County Farmers, Inc.

3. The workers shall be paid the prevailing wage for similar work within the area of employment.\*\*\*

5. To defray Association expenses. The employer agrees to pay the Association:

- a. Membership fee of \$10.00 per year.
- b. For all workers covered by this contract the sum of \$1.00 per man per week, plus non-occupational insurance...
- c. Other regular Association charges.\*\*\*

7. Guarantee to Worker. The Employer guarantees the worker the opportunity for employment for three-quarters of the work days of the total period during which the Individual Work Agreement is, in fact, in effect... In determining whether the guarantee of the employment provided for in this



paragraph has been met, any day on which the worker fails to work, when afforded the opportunity to do so, by the Employer, shall be counted as a day of employment in calculating the days of employment toward the satisfaction of this guarantee.

Subsistence shall be furnished in accordance with the Terms of the Standard Work Contract, as Amended. Subsistence is defined as three meals per day or their equivalent in cash.

In other words, San Diego County Farmers, Inc., like other such growers associations, is intended solely as an instrument for recruiting and dispensing Mexican Nationals under contract. The entire farm placement machinery, public and private, in the Desert-Border area turns upon the assumption that farm labor has been, is, and will be done primarily by braceros. Given the complete control which public and private agencies exercise over farm wages and working conditions in these counties, they have been able to make this assumption come true. Table 14 and Figure 4 suggest the unvarying tendency toward ever greater domination of the Border and Desert Counties by alien contract labor.

Table 14

Peak Employment, Seasonal Domestic Workers and Mexican Nationals, Imperial East Riverside, and San Diego Counties, 1952-1959, with Domestics as Percentage of Regional Total

Year	Three Counties			Imperial County		E. Riverside Co.		San Diego County	
	Mexican Nationals	Domestic Seasonal	Dom. % of Total	Mexican Nationals	Domestic Seasonal	Mexican Nationals	Domestic Seasonal	Mexican Nationals	Domestic Seasonal
1952	13,606	14,835	51.2	8,721	5,784	3,300 <sup>a</sup>	6,000 <sup>a</sup>	1,585	2,550
1953	14,002	15,630	52.1	8,000	8,180	4,002	5,900	2,000	1,550
1954	19,652	14,948	43.2	11,092	8,400	4,450	5,668	4,110	880
1955	20,424	12,660	38.3	10,500	5,790	4,924	6,390	5,000	480
1956	23,480	10,280	30.5	13,250	3,310	5,732	6,170	4,500	800
1957	24,073	9,636	28.6	13,000	3,740	6,678	5,401	4,395	495
1958	23,703	9,328	28.2	13,670	5,070	5,633	3,758	4,400	500
1959	22,764	8,558	27.3	13,750	4,400	4,966	3,668	4,048	490

<sup>a</sup>: Estimated

NOTE: Peaks of use of Mexican Nationals and domestics did not necessarily occur at same season of year.

SOURCE: California Department of Employment, Division of Research and Statistics, unpublished data.

Suggestive as these data are, they mask the even greater domination of the Desert-Border region by Mexican Nationals at certain seasons of the year, and in certain key crops. Table 15 indicates a number of crop-area-activities in which domination is, for every practical purpose, complete. When we read, for example, that 520 of 550 workers employed in the San Diego County celery harvest were braceros, we may be sure the remaining 30 were foremen and checkers, meaning that, in fact, all the celery was actually being cut by foreign contract nationals. The same may be said for any crop-activity in which 85-90% or more of the work is made up of braceros.



-12a-

Figure 3  
FARM WAGES IN DESERT-BORDER REGION, AS PERCENT OF MANUFACTURING WAGES  
IN SAN DIEGO COUNTY, 1952-1959

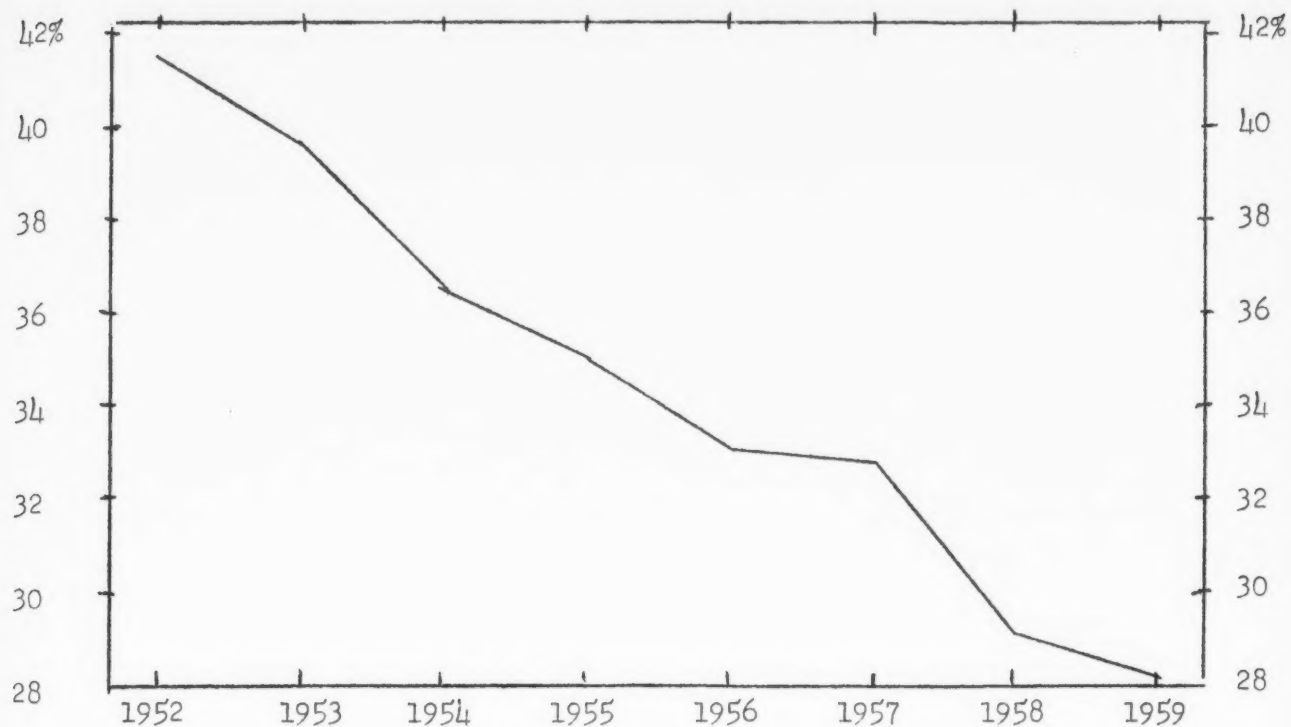


Figure 4  
SEASONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS AS PERCENT OF TOTAL SEASONAL FARM WORKERS,  
IMPERIAL, EAST RIVERSIDE, AND SAN DIEGO COUNTIES, 1952 - 1959

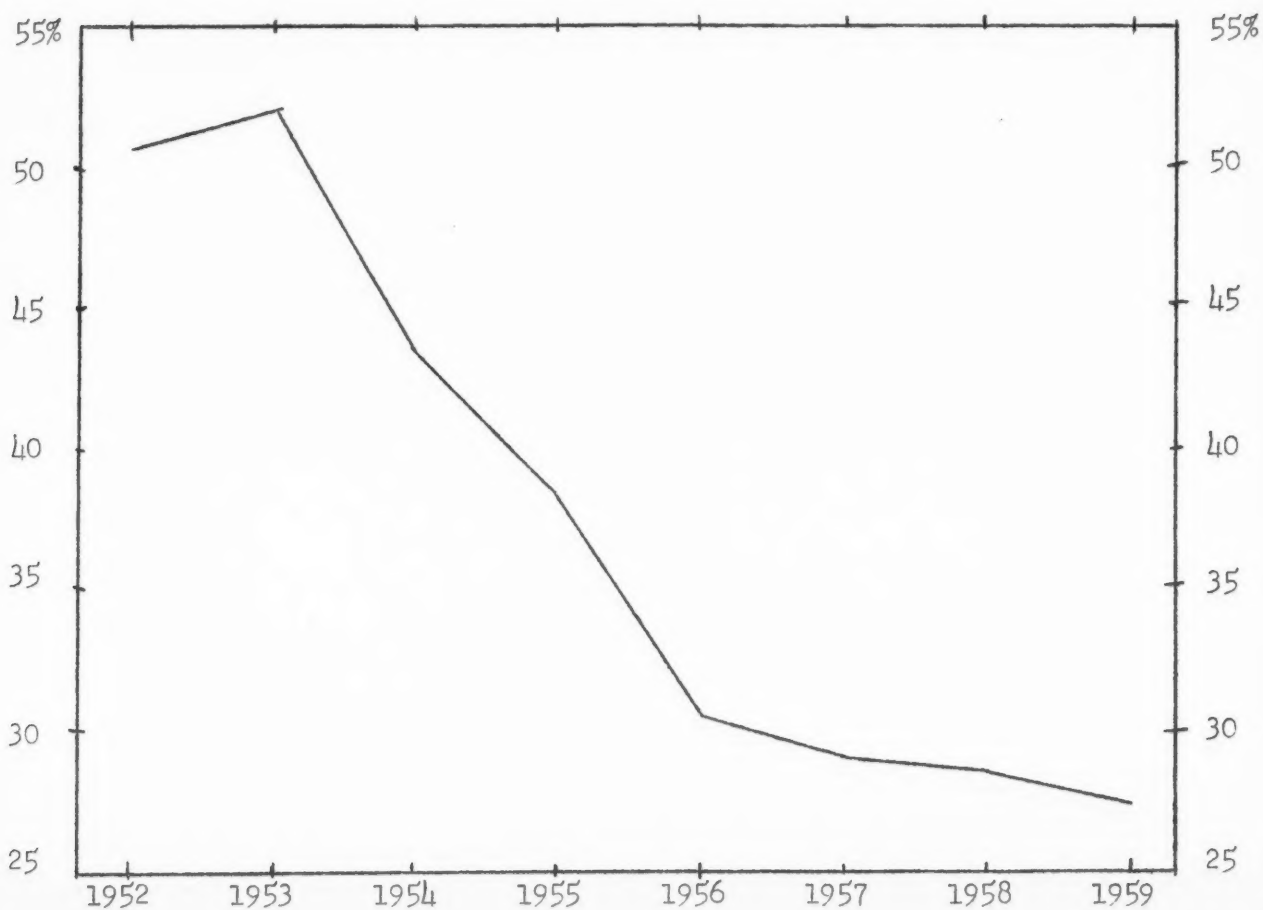


Table 15

Mexican Nationals and Domestic Seasonal Workers in Leading Crop-Activities,  
Imperial, East Riverside, and San Diego Counties, 1957,  
with Mexican Nationals as Percent of Total

County and Crop-Activity	Week Ending	Total Seasonal Laborers	Mexican Nationals	Seasonal Domestic	Nationals as Percent of Total
Imperial, all crops	11/30	14,080	13,000	1,080	92.3
Melons, plant-cap	1/26	800	750	50	93.7
Carrots, weed-hoe	11/30	750	650	100	86.7
Cotton, pick	11/30	6,800	4,940	1,860	72.6
Lettuce, thin-hoe	11/30	2,900	2,720	180	93.8
and cut-pack					
Sugar beets, thin-hoe	12/28	2,200	2,100	100	95.5
East Riverside, all crops	10/26	6,500	5,899	601	90.8
Grapefruit, pick-load	4/27	200	140	60	70.0
Melons, turn vines	5/25	500	480	20	96.0
Cotton, pick	11/30	3,950	3,350	600	84.8
Dates, pick	11/30	800	730	70	91.2
Lettuce, thin-hoe and cut-pack	12/28	1,050	970	80	92.4
San Diego, all crops	4/27	3,350	3,280	70	97.9
Lemons, pick	1/26	300	280	30	93.3
Cucumbers, pick-pack	5/25	200	180	20	90.0
Strawberries, pick-pack	5/25	500	450	50	90.0
Celery, transplant-weed	8/31	550	520	30	94.5
Tomatoes, plant-cultivate, harvest	11/30	1,300	1,150	150	88.5
Peppers (chili), pick-dry	11/30	250	240	10	96.0

SOURCE: California Department of Employment, Division of Research and Statistics, unpublished data (D.E. 881 forms).

#### V. Summary and Conclusions

With the possible exception of the Lower Rio Grande and Trans-Pecos Valleys of Texas, and a few areas of New Mexico and Arizona, the Desert and Border Counties of California afford as striking an example of "domination" as may be found in the United States.

So far as the Desert-Border region is concerned, it is academic at this point to ask, "What might the government agencies do to prevent domination by braceros?" (This may still be asked with respect to other regions, however.) The question, then, becomes, "What does the government do to prevent adverse effect in dominated areas?"

While the very existence of the bracero program makes farm wages in effect, administered wages, those in dominated areas are even more directly and thoroughly administered than most. As the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee has pointed out on many occasions, the entire concept of "prevailing wages" is a travesty, wherever it may be applied. But in a case where there may be 70 domestics working, and 3,280 braceros (San Diego County, April 27, 1957), the farce becomes so broad that even the agencies which administer the bracero system abandon the concept. A legalistic ritual then comes into play. Instead

of making a "prevailing wage finding" the State Farm Placement Service makes a "wage report." The responsibility then devolves upon the U.S. Department of Labor to pass judgment upon whether the Farm Placement Service's "report" of what is being paid braceros is a proper wage standard, or whether the Department should take action under its legal mandate to prevent adverse effect.

From 1951 through the summer of 1955, the Department of Labor considered 70¢ per hour an appropriate standard for East Riverside County. Since September, 1955, the administered wage in that area has been 75¢ per hour. In 1953, as we have seen earlier in this paper, the administered wage in San Diego County was raised from a flat 70¢ per hour to a range of 70-75¢ per hour, and on April 1, 1959, was raised again to a flat 75¢ per hour. In Imperial County, the wage fixed by the U.S. Department of Labor was 70¢ per hour for eight years, until, on November 28, 1959, it was raised to a range of 70-75¢ per hour, and on December 12, 1959, the last administered wage of 70¢ in California disappeared, and 75¢ an hour became the officially sanctioned rate in Imperial County as it already was in San Diego and East Riverside Counties.

It is very interesting to follow the progress of these administered wages, since they reveal the manner in which the Bureau of Employment Security of the Labor Department operates in practice as distinguished from the manner in which, according to regulations, it is supposed to operate. We are reliably informed that there is in existence a Bureau of Employment Security program letter which requires that, in the case of a dominated crop-area-activity, the nearest comparable crop-activity which is non-dominated shall be used for the determination of a prevailing wage rate. This procedure was followed in the Butte-Sutter-Yuba tomato harvest of 1959. At the time of the wage survey by the local farm placement representative, September 14 and 15, "there was an insufficient number of domestic workers employed upon which a finding could be established." (In other words, fewer than 200 domestic workers could be found in a crop-activity which at that time employed nearly 3,000 workers.) Accordingly, this farm placement representative conducted his wage survey elsewhere in the "Sacramento River Delta crop-wage area where crop conditions, methods, and practices are reported to be comparable." It was found in these other areas that the most common wage rate was 13¢ per 50 pound box, rather than the 11¢ per box which was being paid Mexican Nationals in Butte, Sutter, and Yuba Counties. Don Larin, Acting Assistant Director of the Bureau of Employment Security, issued a wage determination of 13¢ per box, effective October 5, 1959. By that time, 85% of the tomatoes had been harvested at the adversely affected rate, and, so far as is known, retroactive adjustments were not made. Nonetheless, a precedent was established, and it is an important precedent -- if it is followed by other farm placement representatives in other areas which are at least as thoroughly dominated by alien contract workers, and in which wages have been at least as adversely affected.

We regret to say that government officials in the Desert-Border area show no evidence of following the precedent of their colleague in the Sacramento Valley. They are, instead, using as a standard, in dominated areas, the nearest dominated area! The Department of Labor takes evident pride in the fact that, after a series of wage orders, covering a period of seven full years -- after painstaking paper work, after soul-searching, cajolery, and persuasion, and, finally, after "getting tough" -- it has dealt with adverse effect by increasing hourly wages 5¢ an hour. An "increase" which has been more than wiped out by declines in piece rates!



To put the matter as gently as we are able, we believe the Department of Labor's interpretation of adverse effect in the Desert-Border region leaves something to be desired. If the Department's own regulations were taken seriously, let us see what the results might be. In order to find an area in which vegetable cultivation and harvesting were not dominated by Mexican Nationals, it would be necessary to go at least as far north as Los Angeles County. Prevailing wages for domestics would be found to be approximately \$1.00 per hour. In order to find the closest cotton and sugar beet operations which were non-dominated, it would be necessary to conduct wage surveys in Kern County. Prevailing wages for domestics would be determined to be \$.90-1.00 per hour. In other words, a simple application of existing regulations would result in the upgrading of wages in the Desert-Border region from an administered 75¢ per hour to an administered level approximately 33% above that figure.

We do not mean to imply that such action would eliminate the adverse effects of the bracero program. The concept of "non-dominated areas" breaks down, among other things, through the outward movement of domestics displaced from dominated areas. We doubt very much that there could be found a nook or cranny of the United States in which farm wages have not been adversely affected to some extent by the existence of alien contract labor programs.

We therefore reiterate our previously stated opinion that the only positive cure for adverse effect in the agricultural labor market is for that market to become competitive, in substantially the same manner as every other labor market in our society. This is not to say that, overnight, agriculture is going to compete for labor on even terms with, say, construction. (Although, eventually, we are convinced it should, and will.) But, in logic, there must be some sort of consonance between what is happening in agriculture and what is happening in the rest of the United States. If other classes of wages remain relatively static for a year or two, as they did in 1953-1954, it is understandable that farm wages, too, might remain relatively static. It is not understandable, however, that farm wages should remain static for eight consecutive years, during a period in which other wages were rising by more than 50%.

It is not understandable, that is, except in view of the fact that agriculture was provided, partially at taxpayers' expense, an unlimited number of alien contract laborers at the "prevailing" or frozen rate.

We do not know what other people may call this process, but we call it adverse effect, courtesy of the U.S. Government.

We do not know how the government agencies justify their roles in this process, but we can conceive of no justification. We continue to believe, perhaps naively, that when the supreme law of the land proscribes adverse effect, persons in the administrative branch of the government should enforce the law. That they have chosen not to do so, saddens us, for we continue to believe, perhaps naively, in the rule of laws and not of men.

# IMPERIAL VALLEY FARMERS' ASSN.

POST OFFICE BOX 100  
IMPERIAL, CALIFORNIA  
PHONE: BLK 2-0000 • BLK 2-0000

KEITH MEYER  
PRESIDENT

L. C. HALBERMANN  
VICE PRESIDENT

B. A. HARRIGAN  
SECRETARY MANAGER

November 23, 1959

## TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE IMPERIAL VALLEY FARMERS' ASSOCIATION

Dear Members:

At a special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Imperial Valley Farmers' Association, held at the Association headquarters, November 20, 1959, a resolution was adopted unanimously to raise the prevailing hourly wage, for Mexican Nationals under contract to this Association, to seventy-five cents per hour effective November 27, 1959.

This was considered to be a necessary and justifiable raise since the prevailing wage for Mexican Nationals, in Imperial County, has remained at seventy cents per hour for some years.

Please be governed accordingly.

Very truly yours,

*B. A. Harrigan*

B. A. Harrigan, Manager  
IMPERIAL VALLEY FARMERS' ASSOC.

BAH:mp





Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Social Welfare.

El Centro Hearing, January 15, 1960.

Statement in behalf of United Packinghouse Workers of America (AFL-CIO) by Clive Knowles, International Representative.

Sanitation in the employment of Agricultural Workers in  
The Imperial Valley.

At the hearing in Sacramento held by this committee on November 17, 1960, Mr Frank Stead, Chief, Division of Environmental Health, State Department of Public Health testified to the need for a statute to meet the threat to the health of agricultural workers and the general public arising from the lack of sanitation facilities in the field operations of California agriculture.

Mr. Stead also introduced certain exhibits which are listed under Roman numeral V on page 46 of the transcript of that hearing. Since those exhibits set forth the general situation relating to the problem, I will not burden the record by further expanding on that material.

I would however like to summarize briefly what some of the findings of the State Department of Public Health have been, before presenting the factual material relating to the Imperial Valley. This is important to an understanding of the facts.

1. It has been found that a situation exists which constitutes a major risk to the health of field workers and the public.
2. It has been found that the specific disease potential involved when food is contaminated by human excreta are: cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery, salmonellosis; viruses; infectious hepatitis. See the statement of Dr. Arthur C. Hollister, Chief, Bureau of Communicable Diseases, State Department of Public Health. Exhibit 3, V. Transcript of 11/17/59. Page 48.
3. It has been found that an adequate sanitary facility in the field packing of vegetables, and in agriculture generally, must of necessity include properly serviced toilets, washing facilities to at least cleanse the hands, pure drinking water; the absence of any one of these elements in a sanitary facility leave the door wide open for the spread of communicable diseases.

According to Mr. Stead, the records of health departments and insurance companies indicate that at least two of the three following risks commonly occur:

1. The risk to the agricultural work force of contracting.

communicable diseases through drinking contaminated water or being required to work and eat without washing facilities.

2. The risk to the general public that food designed for human consumption will become contaminated with human excreta.
3. The risk to the general public that communicable diseases will be spread if the field harvesting crews become infected with and carriers of such diseases as bacillary and amebic dysentery.

Bearing the foregoing in mind, let us consider then the situation with regard to sanitation in the field harvesting and growing activities in Imperial County.

On January 13th, 1960 from 4 P.M. to 5 P.M., I observed the following:

Location 1. 4 miles east of Brawley on Highway 115. 28 field workers. Harvesting cabbage. No sanitation facility.

( If the committee wishes to check on the accuracy of our observations at these locations, a list of the companies operating at each location will be furnished.)

Location 2. 6 miles east of Brawley on Highway 115. 1 mile north. 100 workers. Harvesting lettuce. No sanitation facilities.

Location 3. One mile north of Highway 80 on Highway 115. Two crews. Crew 1. About 50 men. No sanitation facility. Crew 2. About 50 men. one portable toilet about 100 yards from crew. No drinking water. No washing water. Lettuce harvesting.

On January 14, 1960 three observers were dispatched by me in the El Centro area and observed the following:

Location 4. 1 mile north of Highway 80, 1 mile east of El Centro electrical plant. 50 workers hoeing lettuce. no sanitary facility.

Location 5. 3 miles east of El Centro, 2 miles North of Highway 80. 50 Workers harvesting lettuce. One toilet 200 yards approximately from workers. No drinking water.

Location 6. 5 miles East of El Centro, 2 miles north of Highway 80. 70 workers hoeing. Company

not identifiable. No toilet. One man observed defecating in ditch.

- Location 7. 4 miles north of Highway 80, 1 mile west of Highway 115. 100 workers harvesting lettuce. Toilet about 100 yards from crew. No drinking water.
- Location 8. 4 miles north of Highway 80,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Highway 115. 100 workers harvesting lettuce and packing it. No sanitary facility. Worker observed urinating on uncut lettuce.
- Location 9.  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Highway 80,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Highway 115. 25 workers hoeing lettuce. No sanitary facility.
- Location 10.  $4\frac{3}{4}$  miles North of Highway 80,  $\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Highway 115. 40 workers packing cabbage. No sanitary facility.
- Location 11. 5 miles North of Highway 80,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of Highway 115. 35 workers harvesting lettuce. No sanitary facility.
- Location 12. 5 miles North of Highway 80,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile east of Highway 115. 60 workers harvesting lettuce. One toilet located about 400 yards from crew. No drinking water.
- Location 13. 5 miles north of Highway 80,  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles east of Highway 115. 35 workers harvesting lettuce. No sanitary facility.
- Location 14. 6 miles north of highway 80, 2 miles east of Highway 115. 53 workers harvesting lettuce. No sanitary facility.
- Location 15.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of Heber, East of Highway 99. 21 workers hoeing sugar beets. No toilet.
- Location 16.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of Calexico, east side of Highway 99. 100 workers packing lettuce. 1 toilet  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile from crew. No drinking water.
- Location 17. West side of Highway 99 near Calexico. 40 workers. No sanitary facility.
- Location 18. Highway 99, half mile west of McCabe Road. 75 workers harvesting lettuce. Two toilets. No drinking water.
- Location 19. Eight St and McCabe, southeast of El Centro. 46 workers harvesting rapini. No sanitary facility.



Location 20. 7 miles south of El Centro on Highway 99 at the Heber turn. 70 workers covering canteloupes. No Sanitary facility.

Location 21. Near Bright camp close to All American Canal and 8th St. 7 men thinning lettuce. No Sanitary facility.

Location 22.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile north of Highway 198,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile east of 8th St. About 50 workers. Harvesting lettuce. No Sanitary facility.

Location 23. 4 miles north of Sanitarium road and 4 miles east of Highway 115. 125 workers. Harvesting lettuce. No sanitary facility. One worker observed defecating.

Location 24.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Location 23. 20 workers harvesting lettuce. No sanitary facility.

Locations of harvesting or field activities were also observed Tuesday December 1, 1959 and Monday December 7, 1959 as follows:

Location 25.  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile west of Highway 111 Imperial-Holtville junction. 35 men hoeing lettuce. No sanitation facilities.

Location 26. 3 miles South of Highway 80 on Date Road. 10 men thinning Romain. no sanitation facility. Worker observed thinning Romain in middle of field, then urinating on it.

Location 27. 30 workers covering tomato plants 4 miles S. of Highway 80 on Date road. No sanitary facility.

Location 28. On highway 198 north of Mt. Signal Store. 20 men thinning lettuce. No sanitary facility.

Location 29. Highway 198 four miles east of Mt. Signal store. 60 workers thinning lettuce. No sanitary facility.

Location 30. 1 mile north of Calexico on highway 99. 50 workers thinning lettuce. No sanitary facility.

Location 31. Near junction Highway 99 and Highway 11. 30 workers hoeing lettuce. No sanitary facility.

Location 32. 4 miles south of Highway 80, 5 miles west of Holtville. 27 workers hoeing lettuce. No sanitary facility.

Location 33. 3 miles west of Holtville, north of Highway

80. 57 workers hoeing lettuce. No toilets, washing facilities or drinking water. 7 workers observed defecating in small patch of lettuce adjacent to field in which they were working.

Location 34. 3 miles West of Holtville on Highway 80.  
60 workers harvesting lettuce. No Sanitary facility.

Sworn affidavits by the observers will be furnished to this committee, if it is so desired.

These observations were made at random, over a short period of time, and cover only a small portion of the general area around El Centro.

This map which I now show you indicates the locations observed

In summary, out of 34 locations observed, not a single one had a sanitary facility providing toilets, drinking water and washing water. Five of the 34 had toilets in the field, none of which were located closer than 100 yards from the workers. Instances of workers urinating and defecating were observed, although these observations were made at random and in passing and no attempt was made to extend the observation over a period of more than 15 minutes.

So far as our observations go, there is a total lack of sanitary facilities in Imperial Valley, bearing in mind that an adequate facility must of necessity include toilets, washing water and drinking water.

We have been advised by the County Health Department that there are 52 rental toilets available in the county. Assuming that these were all being used and that the growers had an equal number in service, an assumption we believe unwarranted, there would still be only 104 toilets available for the more than 18,000 field workers who normally are employed in Imperial Valley at the peak of the season. That is saying nothing as to the other two elements in an adequate sanitary facility, namely washing water and drinking water.

If there is an adequate sanitary facility in any field operation in the Imperial Valley, it has never come to our attention, and I may say we have been out looking. We would be delighted to hear of one single such facility since it might inspire others to follow suit.

The situation on sanitation in Imperial Valley reveals a shocking lack of any sense of social responsibility by the growers either to the agricultural workers or the general public.

It cannot be solved by voluntary programs as the history of the

period since complaints were first filed in 1955 amply demonstrates.

Let there be no impression that this situation is confined to Imperial Valley. It is a state wide problem wherever vegetables are grown as we can testify from direct observation.

We concur fully with the State Department of Public Health that a statute is required enacting that sanitary facilities be provided wherever agricultural work is performed.





STATEMENT OF LEIAND J. YOST, GENERAL MANAGER  
COACHELLA VALLEY FARMERS ASSOCIATION  
P. O. BOX 845, THERMAL, CALIFORNIA  
HEARING AT EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA  
JANUARY 15, 1960

Senator Cobey and members of the Committee, it is a pleasure to have members of the Legislature present in our area and interested in our farmers' problems.

ASSOCIATION

I am and have been a farmer in the Coachella Valley for 44 years and also am General Manager of the Coachella Valley Farmers Association, an organization of some 659 farmers, which was set up for the purpose of obtaining essential, supplementary farm workers under the provisions of Public Law 78. The directorate of the Coachella Valley Farm Center have aided in the preparation of this statement and concur in it.

The Coachella Valley is an area of small farms devoted largely to specialized crops. The Coachella Valley County Water District reports that the average farm consists of 44 acres.

CROPS

Crops are very diversified, namely: grapefruit, tangerines, sweet corn, tomatoes, egg plant, squash, string beans, melons, dates, cotton, table grapes, asparagus and alfalfa. Most of these crops require a great amount of hand labor and are very expensive to produce and market. This wide diversification makes possible heavy year around employment for able, willing

workers.

#### LABOR PEAKS

The peak labor demand months are November and May. The heaviest work loads are from March to July and October to December which are the periods of the date, cotton and vegetable harvests.

#### YEAR AROUND DOMESTIC EMPLOYEES

The State Employment Service estimates that Coachella Valley farmers employ about 2,500 domestic farm workers on a year around basis. These workers are mostly in the category of foreman, tractor drivers, equipment operators, vine and tree pruners, general ranch hands and irrigators. There has been a continuous shortage of workers, willing to take continuous, year around, farm employment since 1941 and even during the years of the great Roosevelt depression there were shortages every summer.

#### SEASONAL DOMESTIC WORKERS

The State Employment Service estimates that Coachella Valley farmers were employing about 1,350 seasonal, domestic workers on January 1, 1959 and on May 1, 1959, largely in harvest operations such as carrots, citrus, onions, melons, cotton, beans, sweet corn and in "on farm packing sheds." Between those dates the number dropped to 850 to 900. All available, able, willing, workers were employed at all times.

#### SEASONAL FOREIGN WORKERS

Coachella Valley farmers employed, at the peak, 3,272 foreign workers on May 13, 1959. This indicates a need for at least 2,000 supplemental foreign workers for peak harvest operations.

#### DECREASE IN USE OF BRACEROS

Records of the U.S. Department of Labor disclose that the use of supplemental foreign workers, by Coachella Valley farmers, decreased 726 between 1957 and 1958. This demonstrates that more efficient use is constantly being made of domestic workers. The amount of decrease for 1958-59 has not yet been determined.

#### CLIMATE

The desert valleys have high temperatures from May to October, often reaching 120 degrees. Domestic farm workers prefer to go to cooler areas such as Northern California, Oregon and Washington. The exodus starts about April 15th and the return about December 15th. This is one reason that Washington and Oregon have a reasonably ample harvest labor force. The largest racial group of domestic workers in the grape harvest is made up of Filipinos. These men are trained grape workers from the San Joaquin Valley. They do not object to hot weather. We were able to obtain only three crews of domestic workers for cotton picking during August and September 1959. About 150 other domestics engaged in cotton picking during the cooler fall months. There is work for 700 cotton pickers for

six months starting in August.

#### DEPENDABILITY

Farming requires a dependable, willing, labor force and without it crops cannot be grown and harvested. Timing is of vital importance as 24 hours delay can cause great damage. An example of this was last summer's peach loss in Stanislaus County where domestic workers were not available in the quantity needed and the farmers were not allowed to bring in foreign workers until a heavy loss of peaches occurred. Many domestic workers are migrants who will not accept permanent employment but prefer to go from job to job working only a few days in each place. Many will not work at one job long enough to acquire the necessary skills for higher earnings. Able, willing, workers find places in the year around force.

#### CLASS OF WORK

Domestic workers will often accept only certain classes of work. For example, date harvest. No domestics will pick dates although the growers and the State Employment Service have made a determined effort, over the years, to recruit them. Last season the crop was harvested by some 700 foreign workers. The average earnings per hour was \$1.1236 for the entire force. Employment was continuous from September to January with no shut downs.

#### CURRENT SUPPLY OF DOMESTICS

The local State Employment Service office has had below the



normal number of applicants for farm work this month although now the supply is picking up. Carrot harvest has been slow, because of market conditions and farmers have been able to get by without loss so far. No foreign labor is employed in the carrot harvest as domestics usually come in for the cool winter months. Grapefruit harvest has not started and it is hoped the domestic supply will increase before picking becomes imperative. No one, The U.S. Department of Labor nor the State Employment Service, can tell a farmer in advance whether or not he can obtain workers one day ahead of picking time. A supplementary supply of labor must be available when needed to carry on in the absence of domestic workers.

#### OPERATION OF PUBLIC LAW 78

In general, the Bracero program has operated reasonably well in this valley. It has been under constant harassment by the U. S. Department of Labor, unions and some other social worker organizations. The California State administration, seems to be at present, definitely against it. Farm labor housing has been brought up to the high standards of the California Housing Code which is the highest in the United States and feeding has been improved to the point where many camp operators with less than 100 Braceros are operating below cost. All available domestic workers have been employed at all time which demonstrates that under Public Law 78 the program has operated as a true supplementary source of farm labor. It has proven to

be a very expensive deal for the farmer but has made it possible for him to continue producing food and fiber.

#### USE OF SCHOOL CHILDREN

The use of minors in agriculture in this area has not proven to be feasible. With the exception of the later part of the grape and sweet corn crops, our harvests take place when schools are in session. The minors that are available find employment in the grape packing sheds which they prefer to field work.

Minors, in most cases, are not able to perform heavy agricultural field work in a satisfactory manner as they are not physically or mentally mature although they must be paid the same wage per hour as an adult worker. Recruitment of school boys for grape harvest was tried during the war and was a complete failure. I personally brought eight from Riverside. They worked until noon the first day and announced they were quitting. Complaints were that the weather was too hot, they did not like to start at 5:00 A.M., work too hard, could not select ripe grapes. They averaged one lug per hour and picked many green bunches. Men working in the same crew averaged eight lugs per hour.

#### RECRUITMENT

We have run advertisements in local and county wide newspapers, kept open orders with the State Employment Service, used labor contractors, and a year ago one man tried day haul of cotton

pickers from Los Angeles, also constant personal solicitation in valley towns. The State Employment Service has, at times, put out statewide orders for workers. These efforts have never resulted in enough domestic workers to get the job done.

#### UTILIZATION OF DOMESTICS

This valley produces such a wide diversification of crops that some crop is being harvested every month in the year. There is steady work, year around, for those who will accept it. The State Employment Service always has unfilled orders for workers.

#### WAGES AND EARNINGS OF DOMESTICS

A survey of typical Coachella Valley farms, copy of which is attached as Appendix "A", shows the average earnings of year around domestic workers in the usual farm categories to be \$1.54 per hour which includes housing. The lowest hourly wage is 75¢ for stoop labor. Vineyard work \$1.00 per hour. Pick pack \$1.00 per hour plus 25¢ per lug. "On Farm Shed" labor \$1.00 per hour. Corn, sweet, pick 75¢ to \$1.00 per hour. Cotton chop 80¢ per hour.

Harvests of some crops and various other operations are paid on a piece work basis, such as cotton pick \$3.00 cwt., grapefruit pick, size 20¢, strip 10¢ per 50 lb. box, dates pick \$1.00 cwt., bag 3¢ and 3½¢, prune 10¢ to 35¢ per tree; cotton, hoe \$3.00 per ac., etc. The incentive system, at the rates established, have proven to be beneficial, resulting in higher earnings by the worker and lower unit costs to the employer. Housing is

furnished in many cases and outlying farms pay a transportation allowance of \$1.00 to \$1.50 per worker per day.

#### AVERAGE EARNINGS OF FOREIGN WORKERS

The following are the average hourly earnings of foreign workers in dates and cotton, on a piece work basis, last season. This year's averages will be higher due to crop conditions, but are not yet available. However, it is possible to present accurate figures on foreign workers for the entire season as their payrolls come into a central office for checking. Domestic workers should average higher as they should be more skilled.

1958	Dates	\$1.1236	Picking
1958	Cotton	.8052	Picking
1959	Dates	1.28	bagging

Wages for foreign workers are at the same rate as for domestic workers.

#### MECHANIZATION

Coachella Valley farmers are as highly mechanized as their economy will permit. Tractors, special implements, carrot harvesters, date picking towers, special ladders, safety devices, stake drivers, wire stretchers, etc., have been purchased to reduce the use of hand labor but no means has yet been found to eliminate hand work from fruit and vegetable harvesting although the University of California is constantly working to this end.

#### FARMERS ECONOMIC FACTORS

The U. S. Department of Agriculture, under date of November 15, 1959, states "Farmers' income compared to the prices of things



they must buy fell in November to the lowest level in 19 years. The parity ratio dropped to 77, the lowest since 1940. The parity ratio in the same month last year was 84. This is a national figure but applies with full force to Coachella Valley farms. Crop returns vary from year to year due to weather fluctuations and market conditions however the trend of net returns over a period of years, has been steadily downward. The following data on cost of production and returns received for a group of Coachella Valley crops in 1959 are taken from a publication of the University of California, Agricultural Extension Service, Riverside County entitled "1959 Farm Production Costs". Grapefruit was omitted because last years very poor crop would adversely effect a true picture of the situation. You will note that the bell pepper growers had an exceptional year which will not be likely to be repeated for a long time. The data shows that for this entire group of crops labor received 70% of the production costs.

#### COACHELLA VALLEY CROP RETURNS FOR 1959

COMMODITY	COST PER UNIT	P.O.B. RETURN	NET	NET	LABOR COSTS % OF GROSS COST
			RETURNS PER UNIT	RETURNS PER ACRE	
Asparagus	(crate) 5.98	7.00	1.12	112.00	69%
Bell Peppers	(crate) 2.65	6.00	3.35	1340.00	66%
Bush Beans	(Lb.) .13	.142	.012	55.00	64%
Carrots	(crate) 3.90	3.57	(.33)	(41.25)	85%
Pole Beans	(Lb.) 14.4	.19	.046	322.00	63%

Pole Tomatoes (Flats)	1.94	1.85	(.09)	(108.00	71%
Sweet Corn (Crates)	2.20	2.30	.10	17.50	65%
Dates (Lb.)	.06	.07	.01	140.00	67%
Thompson Seedless Grapes (Box)	3.36	4.00	.64	192.00	75%
				Average	70%

Robert Howie, County Agricultural Commissioner of Riverside County in a release dated January 2, 1960 reports that the value of Coachella Valley crops in 1959 fell nearly \$3 million below the total figure for 1958 and more than \$5 million below 1957.

Unfavorable marketing conditions were seen as the primary reasons for the drop by Earl Asker, inspector for the Coachella district.

With competition from other parts of the country, particularly Texas and Mexico increasing, the Coachella Valley does not have the same market position it used to have. Crops were generally good with the exception of grapefruit which was very light and small size.

The Commissioner also reported that total acreage under cultivation in the valley fell by about 2,700 acres during the past year.

Farmers cannot control the selling price of their produce but are forced to sell in an open, competitive market. Industry has the power to set prices on their commodities and can adjust to rising costs. With farm labor accounting 70% of income, further increases

in labor costs cannot be met without corresponding increases in returns. Indications are that even lower returns will be the pattern, not higher. Competition in sales from low wage areas is an increasing factor. The West Coast of Mexico has tripled its vegetable and melon acreage in three years. Farm wages there, I am informed, are about 11 pesos (68¢) per day. Texas with its 50¢ per hour labor, can undersell us in every market and still make a profit. Even Florida can compete with us in California markets on many commodities. North Africa and Asia, with 10¢ per day labor, are major factors in the distressed condition of the date industry. California now is paying 50% higher farm wages than the national average. Taxes on Coachella Valley farms are much higher than in competing states. This year taxes on my 78 acre farm, which is 20 miles out in the country from my market town, amounted to 28.00 per acre.

If California's agriculture is to survive, further inflation of production costs must stop or a way must be found to increase the cost of food and fiber to give the producer a correspondingly greater return.

Gentlemen of the Committee, I thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

COACHELLA VALLEY FARMERS ASSOCIATION

Leland J. Yost, General Manager





APPENDIX "A"  
SURVEY OF WAGES AND BENEFITS PAID  
TO REPRESENTATIVE GROUP OF DOMESTIC  
FARM WORKERS IN COACHELLA VALLEY

RANCHER NO. 1

Employs two domestic and two nationals. Furnishes one family type house together with all utilities to one employee. This man makes \$1.10 per hour, gets a two week paid vacation plus \$25.00 to \$50.00 at Christmas time. Feels utilities and house are worth \$60.00 per month. He furnishes single type dwellings to three other domestics which he feels is worth \$20.00 per month each. These men receive \$1.00 per hour. Average wage of two men \$1.18.

RANCHER NO. 2

Employs one local and one national. He furnishes a family type house together with all utilities to the local. This includes a telephone. He conservatively estimates the house and utilities to amount to \$70.00 per month. Man gets \$1.35 per hour and works ten hours per day six days per week. He gets a \$50 bonus every Christmas and two weeks paid vacation each year. In addition, all tools necessary for the work are furnished. Average hourly wage \$1.68.

RANCHER NO. 3

This ranch uses five locals and two nationals. One local receives \$1.00 per hour plus a family type house, all utilities and two weeks paid vacation. Another domestic gets \$250.00

per month plus all the benefits listed above. The remaining three workers get \$1.05 per hour plus the above benefits. All of these five employees participate in a "Share the Profits Plan." In this plan each will receive from \$8,000.00 to \$10,000.00 at the end of a ten year employment with the company. Four of the five locals also have a retirement plan which costs the company \$600 per year. The company pays all costs of both of the above plans. All the houses have air conditioning and the superintendent feels the houses and utilities are easily worth \$70 per month. These men are not "docked" for necessary trips to town or sickness. Newest worker has been there five years. Average hourly wage \$1.91.

#### RANCHER NO. 4

This ranch employs approximately fifty locals and twenty nationals. All of the local workers get a health program for the entire family. Eight of the locals get family type houses with all utilities paid. Twelve domestic employees get from \$1.15 to \$1.55 per hour. All get one week paid vacation after one year's employment or two weeks after two years or more. All Mexican nationals get one week vacation with pay after one year's employment. Rest of fifty locals (30) get from \$1.00 to \$1.20 per hour. All locals get from \$20. to \$100 at Christmas time. Everyone, including foreign contract workers, receive from \$25.00 to \$100.00 before they leave for vacation. Feels housing worth \$75.00 a month. Average hourly wage \$1.34.

RANCHER NO. 5

Hires three locals and four nationals. One local gets \$1.25 per hour, the other two receive \$1.00 per hour. Employer furnishes single type housing plus all utilities including gas for heating. Two domestics don't have autos so he furnishes necessary transportation. These men do not get paid vacations. Don't get docked for sickness. Feels housing worth \$40 per month. Average hourly wage \$1.35.

RANCHER NO. 6

Employs three locals and four nationals. One local worker gets \$1.35 per hour plus family type house including all utilities (house is heated electrically). Employee gets two weeks paid vacation and all transportation on job. Employer furnishes electric stove in house. Worker is never docked when he is ill. Another local worker gets \$1.25 per hour plus all fringe benefits other worker receives. Third employee gets \$1.20 per hour -- no fringe benefits. Average hourly wage \$1.46.

RANCHER NO. 7

Hires four domestics and two nationals steadily. Pays one domestic \$1.25 per hour and other three receive \$1.10 per hour. Provides three two bedroom houses for three of the men. Other one is not married and he gets single type quarters. All utilities, including electric heating, paid by employer. All four locals get two weeks vacation with pay. All get bonus at Christmas time depending on crops but never less than

\$25., sometimes \$100. Never docked for trips into town for necessities such as doctor, dentist, drivers license, etc. Average hourly wage \$1.43.

RANCHER NO. 8

Uses two local workers and four nationals. One local of Mexican parentage, receives \$340.00 per month, all utilities, including air conditioning. Get all his milk and eggs; grower furnishes hogs and feed and employee gets one-half the pork for taking care of them. Worker gets one month's paid vacation and is furnished a three bedroom frame, stucco and insulated house. This man received a \$660 bonus for 1939. He owns two deep freezers, a new stove, new refrigerator and a TV. Is never penalized financially when ill or has to go to town. The other local gets \$275 per month plus family house and all utilities and a stove and refrigerator furnished. Average hourly wage \$1.83.

RANCHER NO. 9

This ranch hires five steady domestic workers and uses nationals only when harvest comes. One gets \$380 per month plus all utilities (including air conditioning), two weeks vacation and a \$250 bonus. Two others get \$315 per month with same benefits except bonus amounted to \$200. One gets \$1.10 per hour plus housing and the other local gets \$1.00 per hour. This man is old and incapable of working efficiently but is kept on for humanitarian reasons. These get ten day vacations and all



employees get New Years, 4th of July, Thanksgiving, and Christmas off. This ranch did not use nationals for corn or cotton harvest this fall. Local help was used and it was necessary to send a crew into the fields to clean up the empty wine bottles when harvest was over. Average hourly wage \$1.58.

RANCHER NO. 10

Employs one local and one national. Domestic worker receives \$45 per month plus family type house and utilities. He gets two weeks vacation per year and is not penalized for illness. Sometimes it is necessary to work on Sunday. Feels house is worth \$50 per month. Nationals get a Christmas gift of either \$25 or \$50. Average hourly wage \$2.06.

RANCHER NO. 11

Uses six locals and six nationals. One gets \$1.00 per hour plus housing and utilities. No paid vacation but he gets \$200 when he leaves for vacation. At Christmas time he gives all his local employees some gift such as a good watch. Another domestic gets \$300 per month plus family housing and utilities and same vacation plan. Another receives \$1.00 per hour plus family housing, utilities, same vacation but receives \$100 instead of \$200. Others get .80 to \$1.00 per hour depending on type of work plus housing and \$100 at vacation time. All these employees get all the free vegetables they want when in season. Average hourly wage \$1.20.

Average hourly wage paid by eleven ranchers was over \$1.54.

Following is a statement of a date grower in Coachella Valley:

"The following data from my 1959 payroll records may be of interest. This is a break down of my total 1959 payroll of \$15,131.36. Cash wages, before tax or other deductions, are included. In addition, each employee received housing, utilities, and other services or an expense allowance if he provided these himself. This income to the employee over and above wages included in my payroll account ranged in value from six to twelve dollars per week.

NO. OF MEN	CATEGORY	TOTAL WEEKS WORKED BY ENTIRE GROUP	TOTAL EARNED BY GROUP	AVERAGE PER WEEK
1*	Foreman	52	\$ 3,414.85	\$65.67
3	Domestic Labor	36	1,569.60	43.60
10	Braceros	182	10,146.91	55.75

\*Foreman was changed in August, so two men made up this group, one being employed during the period January 1 to August 8, the other from August 8 to December 31. Foreman is a working employee, tractor driver, irrigator, etc.

Actual payroll year covered by above figures is the period 12/26/58 through 12/24/59. This is result of a two week pay period ending each second Thursday.

Bracero earnings were substantially above those of domestic labor because they consistently averaged more hours work per

week and were much more adept in performing piece work operations.

The above payroll is my total ranch payroll for the 52 acres of dates and citrus operated by me except that five acres of dates was harvested by Valley Date crew and ten acres of dates were picked one time over by a Cal-Date crew. An added comment: No men were referred to me by the employment service during 1959, the Indio office stating no date workers were available. As I have only three acres of citrus, all employees must be able and willing to work in date palms."

Strike

ADDRESS ON BEHALF OF THE DESERT RANCH OWNERS ASSN.

We feel very strongly the importance of presenting a strong case against the constant sabotage that has prevailed against the bracero program by organized labor, over the last year or so. We must all realize that these labor groups are highly organized, and that for the most part the farmers, or the employers' group, if you would like to call it that, are completely disorganized, and are very busy, and so do not take part in these public hearings. Very often, because of that, rulings are passed which are very detrimental to our operations.

We believe that certain factors should be recognized and taken into consideration.

1. There is no dependable, domestic labor force available over most of the crop season in the desert area, and during the warm part of the year, when we most need this help, there is virtually no migratory help available, for these people have moved into the cooler areas.
2. The average, capable farm laborer is steadily employed on one of the ranches, where he is paid a fair salary, provided with a home, and various other fringe benefits. The balance of the so-called unemployed are essentially unemployable. At least 90% of them are completely incompetent, either by virtue of their addiction to alcohol, very low mental capacity, unsavory background (previous criminal records, etc.): or they are just plain lazy bums who don't want to work, who have to go out and at least apply for a job in order to collect their unemployment compensation. This latter group are usually trouble-makers who attempt to keep the other employees from working, as well as not working themselves.

There are also a group of itinerant farm workers who come into the valley during the cooler months of Winter, who help in vegetable harvests, etc., and who move with the crops. Some of these workers perform satisfactory jobs, but as soon as the warm weather comes, they migrate into the cooler, higher valleys, and it is at that time that the bracero is absolutely necessary in both the Imperial and the Coachella Valleys.

California produces a great variety of vegetables and fruits, many more varieties than does any other state. Many of these fruits are of a type that must be harvested immediately when they are ripe or the farmer suffers severe losses. This was evident this past Summer when virtually the entire peach crop was lost due to a labor shortage which was brought about primarily by the failure of the government to provide sufficient quantities of braceros to handle the crop. The Mexican bracero is peculiarly adapted to agricultural work. It has been his life, the type of thing that he knows how to do and to which he is accustomed. He is able to withstand the high temperatures and back-breaking stoop labor work which only the Mexicans and Oriental races seem fitted for.



California has been built by one thing, agriculture, and must compete with every other state in the union for its share of the market, and it should be able to compete in the world market. Labor practices, fringe benefits, feather bedding and other waste and inefficiency brought about by organizations interested only in collecting more dues, have already seriously damaged many of our industries, and are now threatening agriculture. Agriculture already is a very close margin business; labor comprises its greatest cost item. If this labor cost is further increased by inefficient personnel, slow-downs, walk-outs, etc., we may soon be importing food stuffs, and be without the strong agricultural background that has built our nation.

Some of these projections may seem far fetched, but you need only look at what has happened in the last few years to the American automotive industry. Just a short time ago the American car was the standard of the world, and in every country to which we travelled, we found the American car to be more prevalent than any other, even in those countries which have now taken over the world automotive market. Through feather-bedding, high labor costs and other general inefficiency, coupled with strikes, etc., the United States is now rapidly becoming an importer of automobiles. Within another year, 50% of the steel consumed in the United States will be imported from abroad. This is an extremely unhealthy condition, and there is yet time to prevent the same thing from happening in agriculture. One way is to provide adequate labor to produce food products at low cost, so that there might be high consumption of the products produced within our country and abroad. Let us not price California out of the agricultural market.



A COPY OF THE TESTIMONY OF JOHN R. NORTON, III, ELYTHE, CALIFORNIA, GIVEN AT THE CALIFORNIA SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND WELFARE HEARING IN EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 15, 1960.

Gentlemen, I am in the business of farming in the Pale Verde Valley in Eastern Riverside County, California. When advised of this hearing, I requested that I be allowed to testify before your committee in regard to the extreme importance of the Mexican National Labor Program to the operation of my farm and most other farms in my area. Our Valley is a remote and isolated area and entirely dependent on this foreign labor program for a successful agriculture. In order to determine how important this labor program is to the citizens of our Valley, other than the farmers themselves, I asked the President of our Elythe Chamber of Commerce to discuss this problem in their last regular meeting and determine the opinion of that group in order that I might know to what degree the position of the farmer is supported by the community as a whole. The result of that meeting is the following resolution made by the Elythe Chamber of Commerce which I will read now.

**ELYTHE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RESOLUTION ATTACHED HERETO AS EXHIBIT "A".**

Another very important point I would like to present is one which I gleaned from the January 7, 1960 issue of the Riverside Daily Enterprise, Page B-6, a copy of which is attached hereto. This fact is that in the last five years business has expanded approximately 22% in the City of Elythe, California. I point this out to illustrate that the continued use of Braceros in the Elythe area has not depressed or retarded the growth of business in that area.

I have here with me a copy of the bulletin entitled "1959 Farm Production Costs", published by the University of California Agricultural Extension Service of Riverside. I will submit for your study this booklet marked as Exhibit "B". I would like to point out some facts which are presented in this booklet concerning costs of production and average prices received for the principle crops which I grow in the Pale Verde Valley.

The first crop, and one of the very most important crops in the Valley, is



cotton. According to the Riverside County Agricultural Extension Service, as shown on Page 27 of this booklet, the average cost of producing a bale of cotton is \$152.85. The average price received for cotton in the last five years has been \$31.25 to \$33.00 per 100 wt. of lint. This will return approximately \$160.00 per bale, leaving a profit of \$7.15 per bale. The average yield has been in the vicinity of two bales per acre or slightly less, thereby giving a profit of approximately \$14.00 per acre. This is an extremely narrow margin when it is considered that anything over 100 acres is a large crop. As you know, it is the plan of the United States Department of Agriculture to lower the support price of cotton again in 1960 and 1961. Lowering the price of cotton a mere \$7.50 per bale will throw many growers into the loss column with our present wage rates. Any increase in wage rates or production would only aggravate this cost-price squeeze further.

I would next like to point out the principle vegetable and produce crops in the Palo Verde Valley and will start with cantaloupes as shown on Page 73 of the booklet. The average cost of producing cantaloupes is \$3.90 per crate. However, the Agriculture Commissioner of Riverside County states that the average price received over the past seven years has been \$3.57 per crate. As you can readily see the cantaloupe growers in the Palo Verde Valley have been operating at a loss for the past several years, and I can personally testify as to the truth of that. The rising cost of production, coupled with competition from Texas and Arizona, where much lower wage rates prevail, have put the California growers at a distinct disadvantage. We cantaloupe growers of California have been hoping that the cost of production differential between our state and others might narrow rather than widen, which would certainly happen if the Bracero program is not allowed to continue as it has been in the past. We have always been confronted with a freight rate differential to the Eastern markets which is in itself a tremendous obstacle when competing with Texas.



Testimony of John R. Norton, III  
Page Three

This coming spring melon acreage in the Palo Verde Valley will certainly be the lightest in several years. I know that the melon industry in our Valley has lost tremendous sums of money in the last two years and many growers are unable to continue.

The main vegetable crop in the Palo Verde Valley is lettuce. As shown on Page 79, the cost of production of one carton of lettuce is \$1.78. The average price received for the past seven years has been \$1.19 per carton. I would like to emphasize that these costs are both on a per carton basis, which is the standard container used at this time. In their example on Page 79, they quote an average price per crate of \$2.39, but the crate has been virtually discontinued in our business and the carton unit contains half as much lettuce as the old standard crate. Therefore, based upon current cost of production and average price received over the last seven years, the lettuce growers are operating at a loss.

Cost of production of onions as shown on Page 81 is \$1.28 per bag. The average price received in the last seven years is \$1.09. On Page 87, the cost of production of a ton of watermelons is \$45.50. The average price received over the last seven years is \$45.03.

I think the above information clearly indicates the inability of the farmers in our area to pay more for labor costs. Our main competition in these crops is from Arizona and Texas. Any California legislation which raises our production costs without corresponding legislation in competitive states or on a federal basis would make us immediately unable to compete.

The total value of produce crops grown in our valley runs in excess of six million dollars annually. This represents new wealth to the State of California, since more than 90% of this food is shipped, sold, and consumed out of the state. This can be substantiated by the fact that accurate records for the Lettuce Vacuum Cooling Plant in Elythe, where virtually all the lettuce grown is processed, show

that only five to six percent of the lettuce shipped out of the Elythe area is distributed to points within the State of California. To arbitrarily wipe out this great source of wealth to our community and the state as a whole would be a crime against our citizens.

An honest attempt is being made by the farmers in our Valley to use as few Mexican Nationals as necessary. Myself and my fellow farmers are willing and desirous of using all domestic labor available at all times. But where are they? They are conspicuous by their absence despite constant recruiting efforts. Any attempt to force liquidation of the Bracero program or to deprive farmer of this source of dependable labor would only permanently harm the agricultural economy and accomplish nothing constructive for the community as a whole.

I can cite two different situations which indicate the extreme necessity for Mexican Nationals in our Valley. First, I will tell you an experience of mine last April and May when I was embarking upon the harvest of my 120 acre crop of onions. The Area Representative for the Farm Placement Service, California Department of Labor contacted me several times in regard to my needs for labor in clipping and harvesting these onions. I encouraged him in every way to procure all the domestic labor possible, as I was desirous of harvesting the crop rapidly and efficiently. Both he and I made repeated attempts to secure domestic labor crews and/or individuals in both the Indie area and in our Valley and we were able to secure absolutely no help. I was forced, not by choice but by absolute necessity, to harvest the entire crop with Mexican National labor, since no local or domestic labor exhibited enough interest to even come to the field and look at the crop. This scarcity of domestics for stoop labor is illustrated by the following figures: In January of 1958 there were 2033 Braceros in the Pale Verde Valley and only 128 domestics available for similar work. In June of 1958, the figures were 1750 Braceros to 42 domestics. In November of 1958, the figures were 2490 Braceros to 30 domestics.

Secondly I would like to state that complete mechanization of cotton harvesting in our Valley has been impossible up to this time. With the high water table and hot, humid weather during the cotton growing season, we are unable to prevent the cotton from growing lush and rank on soil of only moderate fertility. A picking machine has not yet been invented which can cope with this type of cotton. Many growers, including myself, have constantly attempted to regulate the growth to enable us to machine harvest the crop and have repeatedly failed. We have also pleaded with the California Breeding Station at Shafter to develop a variety of cotton suited to our conditons. Up to this time, they have been unable to produce anything more suitable than the standard Acala 4-42 variety which was developed primarily for the San Joaquin Valley and which grows quite differently and satisfactorily in that valley.

In conclusion I would like to state that the facts and opinions presented hereinabove can be supported and are shared by all of the farmers and business men with whom I have come in contact in the Palo Verde Valley.



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"A"

PALO VERDE VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHARTERED BY  
BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA  
"Gateway to Southern California"

RESOLUTION

January 8, 1960

WHEREAS, Sixty five percent of the economy of Blythe, California depends upon agriculture and therefore a healthy and successful agriculture is of primary importance to all the citizens of Blythe, California and

WHEREAS, the Palo Verde Valley Chamber of Commerce has fully considered the Mexican National Labor (bracero) program as to its effect on agriculture and all other commerce in the Palo Verde Valley and

WHEREAS, full employment opportunities are available for all domestic labor in Palo Verde Valley, and

WHEREAS, without the number of Mexican National workers used in the area in the past, the crops of the valley could not be grown and harvested.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Palo Verde Valley Chamber of Commerce does hereby emphatically endorse and support the uninterrupted continuance of said Mexican National program in the same manner and with the same benefits to the agriculture of the Palo Verde Valley as have heretofore been established.



"Sunshine for Health - Water for Wealth"



PALO VERDE VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

CHARTER NO.  
BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA  
*Gateway to Southern California*

Said benefits shall include, but not be limited to, the continuance of wage rates for farm labor in this area which would not place the agriculture of this area at a competitive disadvantage with others producing the same crops such as Arizona and Texas.

It is also herein requested that this resolution be introduced and accepted as a matter of record in the State of California Senate Hearing being conducted in El Centro, California on January 15, 1960.

PALO VERDE VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Blythe, California

Veryl F. Bommer, President



*"Sunshine for Health      Water for Wealth"*

D. DANENBERG

SWORN STATEMENT OF DANNY DANENBERG

Appearing

Before The

SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE

on

LABOR and WELFARE

Court House - El Centro, California - Friday, January 15, 1960

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

James A. Cobey, Chairman  
Alan Short, Vice Chairman  
James J. McBride  
Robert I. Montgomery  
Albert S. Rodda  
John F. Thompson  
J. Howard Williams

Also Sitting

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Paul L. Byrne, Chairman  
J. William Beard, Vice Chairman  
Nathan F. Coombs  
Alan A. Erhart  
John J. Hollister, Jr.  
Robert F. Montgomery  
John A. Murdy, Jr.  
Virgil O'Sullivan  
Joseph A. Rattigan  
Waverly Jack Slattery  
Walter W. Stiern  
J. Howard Williams

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

I believe we will all agree that the basic National economy today comprises of three important fields, namely, Agriculture, Industry, and Joint Defense Military Installations. We, in the Imperial Valley have very little industry, one military base on a standby basis, so therefore, it can truly be said that our basic economy is Agriculture.

Because of this, we naturally have been very closely associated with people who are not in Agriculture and we together have worked to build a better community by our mutual interest in schools, churches, hospitals and civic enterprises. Through the years, we farmers have felt that we have had the confidence and respect of our Good Neighbors, but today, we are greatly concerned about this because the entire Bracero Program has been clouded by false and misleading information, implying all sorts of imaginary and unfounded abuses and exploitation along with the contention that ample local labor is available.

While, no doubt, it will be said many times here today, I feel that it is very important to state that under Public Law 78, Congress defined very clearly THAT UNDER THE LAW, NO BRACERO IS TO BE EMPLOYED IN A COMMUNITY UNLESS THE SECRETARY OF LABOR FIRST CERTIFIES THAT LOCAL DOMESTIC LABOR IS NOT AVAILABLE. That is the law, and I am sure we agree that is the way it should be.

## INSURANCE

I feel that it is very important for this Committee to note that the Mexican National is covered under law by employee-paid occupational insurance but, in my opinion, some misinformation has been directed toward the non-occupational insurance whereby the Mexican Government requires that each National in my employ pay \$2.70 monthly premium for this policy which is carried by the well rated Constitutional Life Insurance Company. My current findings are that all medical treatment is subject to review by the Secretary of Labor and/or the Mexican Consul, and it is my understanding that no Mexican National undergoing medical treatment can be returned to Mexico until three (3) medical doctors have certified that he is medically able and fit. I have every reason to believe that this program is now being run very satisfactorily, but may I repeat .... there has been some allegations, so therefore, in the best public interest, may I urge this Committee to seek out the facts relating to insurance under the Mexican National Program because all of the citizens of this community need a lot more light and far less heat on that subject.

## THE NATIONAL FARM SCENE

We Imperial Valley farmers share with our fellow California farmers, a deep concern at the present plight of American Agriculture. Official Government figures reveal that our farm population, constituting 13% of the population, receives only 6% of the National income. Our farmers, with large investments in land and equipment, often receive less than California farm labor, which receives the highest vegetable farm wages in the United States.



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### "THE FOOD \$ DOLLAR"

In November of 1959, the farmer's part of the food portion of the consumers food dollar decreased to 38¢; in November of 1950, it stood at 50¢. Marketing cost continues to rise at the rate of 5% per year.

The Farmer's part of the Consumer Portion of Food Dollar	
November - 1950	November - 1959
50¢	38¢

### "RETAIL FOOD INDEX"

While the Consumer's Retail Food Index has gone up, cost of living raises in wages have kept a much faster pace, so now, food costs less in proportion to wages for an hour of work so that in 1959, the consumer bought more food, a greater variety of food, and food of higher market quality than ever before.

Retail Food Index	
1950	1959
101.2	119.4

### "FARMERS SELL FOR WHOLESALE"

The U.S.D.A. Crop Reporting Board release, dated November 15, 1959, shows that prices received by farmers have decreased farm income 15% on all crops from the following Government Index.

Prices Received by Farmers		
1947-1949	November 1959	% Decrease
100	85	15%

### "BUYING FOR RETAIL"

The Summary of prices paid by farmers by the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, showed that the Index stood at 119, or up 19%.

#### Prices Paid by Farmers

1947 - 1949	November 15, 1959	% Increase
100%	119	+ 19%

### FARM PARITY PRICES

On November 30, 1959, the U.S.D.A. Crop Reporting Board, Washington, D.C., issued the following release. "With the index of prices received by farmers down 2% and the index of prices paid by farmers including interest, taxes, and farm wage rates up slightly, the parity ratio declined 2 points to 77, A 19 YEAR LOW."

#### "AGRICULTURAL PRICES

November 15, 1959

Release:  
November 30, 1959  
3:00 P.M. (E.S.T.)

# SUMMARY TABLE

Index 1910-14=100	November 15, 1958	October 15, 1959	November 15, 1959	Record High	
				Index	Date
Prices Received	247	235	230	313	Feb. 1951
Parity Index 1/	294	296	297	299	2/Apr. 1959
Parity Ratio	84	79	77	123	Oct. 1946

1/ Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates based on data for the indicated dates. 2/ Also May 1959.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
Pr 1(11-59)

Crop Reporting Board  
Washington, D.C."

"AGRICULTURAL PRICES, November 1959

Crop Reporting Board, AMS, USDA

Index numbers of Prices Paid by Farmers, Interest, Taxes, and Wage Rates  
and related data, United States, November 15, 1959, with comparisons

Indexes and ratios	Average		1958			1959		
	1935- 39	1947 49	Sept 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Sept 15	Oct 15	Nov 15
1910-14=100								
<u>PRICES PAID BY FARMERS</u>								
Commodities and Services, Interest Taxes, and Wage Rates .....	125	250	294	294	294	297	296	297+18.8
Prices Paid .....	124	240	274	274	274	274	275	275
Family living items .....	124	244	286	287	288	288	290	291
Food and tobacco .....	117	239	281	---	---	276	---	---
Clothing .....	117	285	323	---	---	331	---	---
Household operation .....	118	178	208	---	---	210	---	---
Household furnishings .....	137	256	266	---	---	266	---	---
Building materials, house .....	154	339	405	---	---	412	---	---
Autos and auto supplies .....	147	233	317	---	---	325	---	332
Production items .....	124	237	265	265	263	265	264	264
Feed .....	105	231	199	196	192	195	194	195
Feeder livestock .....	124	348	386	389	392	374	360	348
Motor supplies .....	104	140	173	---	---	173	---	---
Motor vehicles 1/ .....	161	290	406	---	415	418	---	425
Farm machinery .....	153	239	360	---	---	377	---	---
Farm supplies .....	140	235	264	---	---	262	---	---
Building & fencing materials ....	145	296	387	---	---	394	---	---
Fertilizer .....	102	143	153	---	---	152	---	---
Seed .....	118	242	216	---	---	203	---	---
Interest 2/ .....	119	79	176	176	176	194	194	194
Taxes 3/ .....	182	270	470	470	470	496	496	496
Wage Rates 4/ .....	121	430	566	594	594	618	602	602
<u>PARITY RATIO 5/</u>	86	108	87	85	84	80	79	77
Production items, interest, taxes and wage rates .....	126	255	300	301	300	303	302	302
<u>UNREVISED INDEX (as calculated prior to Jan. 1, 1950)</u>								
Prices Paid, Interest, & Taxes ...	127	242	305	304	306	311	311	313
Prices Paid .....	124	253	303	302	304	306	306	309
1947-49=100								
Prices Received by Farmers .....	40	100	94	92	91	88	87	85-15%
Wholesale prices: 6/								
All commodities .....	7/52	100	119	119	119	120	119	119+19%
Other than farm & food products .	7/58	100	126	126	127	128	128	129
Prices Paid by Farmers, Interest, taxes, and Wage Rates .....	50	100	118	118	118	119	118	119+19%
Consumers' prices (CPI) 8/ .....	60	100	124	124	124	125	126	---
Average hourly earnings, mfg. production workers 9/ .....	45	100	161	161	163	166	166	---



- 1/ Includes autos, trucks, and tractors.
- 2/ Interest payable per acre on farm real estate debt.
- 3/ Farm real estate taxes payable per acre (levied in preceding year).
- 4/ Seasonally adjusted.
- 5/ Ratio of Index of Prices Received to Index of Prices Paid, Interest, Taxes, and Wage Rates. Not necessarily identical to a weighted average percent of parity for all farm products largely because, pursuant to law, parity prices for some commodities are on a transitional basis.
- 6/ Bureau of Labor Statistics' index for week including 15th of the month.
- 7/ Based on monthly averages.
- 8/ Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- 9/ Based on earnings per hour as estimated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics."

I believe we must agree that these Indexes certainly spell out what each farmer already knows, namely, farm income hitting the lowest point in 19 years - yet the 1950 tractor which cost \$8,000.00 went to \$9,000.00 in 1953, and now it has a price tag of \$15,000.00. I feel there is a real paradox in agriculture when labor and industry have recorded an all time high earnings record, and our National farm economy hits the lowest point in 19 years. Isn't it now time to ask a fair question on a local level, a state level, and a National level, namely; can farmers keep on buying for retail and selling for wholesale?

#### IMPERIAL VALLEY LETTUCE CROP

Imperial Valley is the oldest lettuce producing area of any importance in the United States. The lettuce industry is subject to many risks. However, in few other industries are growers faced with more severe or rapid changes. By its very nature, it is a very perishable crop, difficult to predict, and reacts notably to weather, insects, growing conditions, including surplus and market factors. While it is a very popular market item at point of sale, it is also a very complex item because consumer buying reacts to high prices, thus proving that at one price level, lettuce will meet ready acceptance and move in volume as a staple commodity, and at another price level, consumption slows up, proving that the consumer will often treat it as a luxury item, and buy accordingly when the price is above a certain point. Because lettuce is of prime economic value to Imperial Valley, there are several important topics of major importance that I would like to discuss and present here today, namely:

1. That Imperial Valley lettuce growers have proudly resisted Government subsidies in the production and marketing of their lettuce crops throughout the years.
2. That buyers at shipping point and consumers at point of sale are becoming more demanding along quality lines and today, lettuce must be harvested at the "peak of perfection" which means green - fresh - mature and not bruised or decayed. Today, lettuce that does not meet these specifications is passed up -- not picked up!
3. That the buying trade and the consumer's demand for a better delivered product justified the switch from the wooden icepak crate to the vacuum



cooled carton. These findings are supported by United States Department of Agriculture Marketing Research Bulletin No. 225, issued 30 June 1958, stating as follows: "With the change from wooden crates to fiberboard cartons, the amount of damage in transit to containers and lettuce has been lessened. Damage loss claims paid by railroads on all lettuce averaged \$19.34 per rail car in 1951-1953 when most lettuce was in crates and \$8.76 per rail car in 1954-1955 when cartons predominated. This saving of 3.2 cents per 4-dozen container accrues to the railroad, but in the long-run, may be reflected in the cost of transportation.

Vacuum cooling reduces the body temperature of leafy vegetables rapidly. The quicker lettuce can be cooled after harvest, the longer its quality can be safeguarded. Vacuum cooling makes possible improvement in the quality of lettuce throughout the various marketing stages. Harvest quality can be maintained and the life of lettuce extended for relatively long periods. When cooled by ice, lettuce requires a longer time to reach optimum temperatures. Several other advantages are attributed to vacuum cooling: There is (1) No bruising damage caused by ice and, (2) less organic decay."

May I again state that these findings were made by the United States Department of Agriculture and is a part of a broad research program.

#### VACUUM COOLING PLANTS

There are today, 13 vacuum cooling plants in operation here in the Imperial Valley, providing not only an industry service, but also have added community wealth and employment in the cities of Brawley, Holtville and El Centro, where workers are employed. I am a patron of the Shippers Service Plant in El Centro, and present herewith the job classifications and average hourly rates for the entire 1958 Season from that plant.

<u>JOB CLASSIFICATION</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>AVERAGE HOURLY RATE</u>
Set Up	\$2,232.27	\$2.16
Tube Tender	2,236.18	2.17
Fork Lift	10,995.83	2.42
Set Off	27,530.57	4.14
Loaders	<u>41,376.46</u>	<u>6.24</u>
TOTAL WAGES	\$84,371.31	AVERAGE HOURLY WAGE \$3.42

4. That approximately 20,000 cars or 12 million cartons of highly perishable Imperial Valley lettuce must move to market in 90 days; the labor must be on hand to harvest this crop when the lettuce has reached its proper stage of growth and maturity. The economic importance is such that the farmer cannot afford, nor can the local community, along with the consuming public,

afford the cost, or the uncertainty in the supply of labor. A labor shortage spells out a crop shortage, which means higher costs to the consumer and less return to the farmer - actually, everybody loses. The Mexican National Labor Program gives such labor assurance and with continued migration from farms to industrial centers of the former seasonal farm worker, this program is of more importance today than ever in the past. But even so, we must recognize our moral and legal obligation. Giving first preference to our domestic workers, even though experience has proven that, as a general rule, United States Citizens will avoid "stoop" labor, except as a last resort because, by experience, temperment, and physical capacity, they are not ordinarily qualified. That point does not relieve us of our obligation to those domestics who seek farm work, but any assumption that the problem of finding farm workers for seasonal employment has changed materially is very unrealistic because industrial and defense layoffs that swell the total of unemployed do not materially increase the supply of so-called "stoop" labor.

THE BRACERO PROGRAM, AND ITS ECONOMIC EFFECT ON FARM WAGES, FARM EMPLOYMENT, RETAIL MERCHANTS, AND THE COMMUNITY.

I believe it would be very dangerous if all of us ever became completely satisfied with everything -- it would mark the end of improvement on this, or any other kind of program. I do not say that the program is 100% right -- but neither are some of the things which have been said about the program been 100% right. I do say though, that finger-pointing by implication is an ancient game which convicts everyone, corrects nothing and only breeds misinformation. The time has now come when we must determine not who's right, but what's right and put the searchlight of facts on some honest, as well as realistic questions and answers.

HAS THE PROGRAM ADVERSELY AFFECTED FARM WAGES?

"Farm wage rates have been rapidly increasing in all areas of the United States. The national situation is reflected in the following table:

United States Farm Wage Rate Index--Adjusted for Seasonal Variation  
(1910-14=100)

	January	April	July	October
1947 .....	399	397	404	404
1950 .....	429	427	429	428
1953 .....	514	508	514	515
1956 .....	522	538	534	550
1957 .....	554	562	552	565
1958 .....	567	567	---	---

The increase in farm wage rates in the major Mexican national labor using areas since the institution of Public Law 78 has paralleled the national trend and in most cases has exceeded the national trend. This is summarized in the following table:

Farm Wage Rates for Selected States and the  
United States Composite Rates per Hour<sup>1</sup>

	1950	1952	1954	1956	1957	Increase 1950-57	
						Cents per hour	Percent
Arizona .....	\$0.616	\$0.709	\$0.750	\$0.807	\$0.820	20.4	33.1
Arkansas .....	.425	.511	.512	.561	.584	15.9	37.4
California ....	.875	1.007	1.031	1.094	1.113	23.8	27.2
Colorado .....	.622	.754	.736	.771	.817	19.5	31.3
Michigan .....	.576	.701	.741	.793	.818	24.2	42.1
New Mexico ....	.517	.606	.594	.648	.701	18.4	35.6
Oregon .....	.912	1.053	1.039	1.093	1.120	20.8	22.8
Texas .....	.534	.651	.633	.660	.681	14.7	27.5
Utah .....	.703	.839	.866	.908	.921	21.8	31.0
Washington ....	.939	1.083	1.104	1.163	1.206	26.7	28.4
Wisconsin .....	.586	.717	.719	.750	.786	20.0	34.1
UNITED STATES .	.552	.654	.645	.688	.725	17.3	31.3

<sup>1</sup> The figures reported are the simple averages of the quarterly composite rates per hour published by the Department of Agriculture in The Farm Labor Situation."

WHAT TWO STATES LEAD THE NATION IN THE COMPOSITE RATE OF WAGES PAID TO FARM LABOR?

California and Washington and both of these states use Mexican Nationals as supplemental farm labor.

WHO ESTABLISHED THAT AND WHAT DOES IT PROVE?

The Government Report on Farm Labor issued January 1959, which is enclosed as Exhibit No. 1, clearly proves that point. Also, that farm wages should be proved by facts -- not fiction.

HAS THE PROGRAM CREATED EMPLOYMENT IN CALIFORNIA?

Page 2 of "California Agriculture Facts" released on October 1959, by the University of California stated as follows: "During the past 15 years, California employment gained 83.5% compared with a total employment increase in the U.S. of 56.2%.

WHAT 10 OTHER ECONOMIC POINTS DID THE CALIFORNIA AGRICULTURE FACT REPORT BY THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA ESTABLISH?

1. The labor force in agriculture has decreased by about 30% since 1940.  
Only 8% of the U.S. population is now in agriculture, compared to 10% in 1940 and 20% in 1900. California's gain in manufacturing employment during the past eight years was 13% larger than the total which was experienced by New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, and Texas combined.
2. Peak demands for labor are usually reached in September, with the seasonal lows coming in February and March. In September 1958 about 565,000 persons were working on California farms --- 85,000 foreign contract workers, 316,000 hired domestic farm workers, 165,000 farmers and unpaid family workers.



3. In 1958 California agriculture employed 480,000 civilian workers. The total investment per farm worker averages more than \$14,000. On some farms it is more than \$50,000 --- three to four times the investment per worker in industry.
4. Capital requirements for farming in California are high. Minimum investment for an adequate family citrus orchard is about \$60,000; for cattle raising \$80,000 to \$100,000; for field crops \$80,000. California farmers are large buyers of labor, equipment, and supplies. Here's a partial list for 1954 (latest census data):
 

Feed for livestock and poultry .....	\$314,000,000
Commercial fertilizer and lime .....	\$ 70,000,000
Hired labor .....	\$440,000,000

Total sales of commercial fertilizer in California now exceed one million tons annually. California farmers spend more than \$50 million a year to control pests -- one-third of the U.S. total or 20 cents out of every dollar spent for agricultural pesticides. California farmers now have some 174,000 automobiles, 149,000 tractors, 130,000 motor trucks, 10,000 grain combines, 8,000 pickup hay balers, 3,000 field forage harvesters, and 640 corn pickers.
5. California ships annually some 275,000 carloads of farm products. At 50 cars per train that would be 5,500 trainloads per year -- an average of 15 trainloads each day of the year or one car every two minutes. California farmers spend over \$450 million each year shipping their farm products.
6. California farmers depend less upon subsidies by the federal government than do those of most other states. In 1958 California's share of receipts from farm marketing of "basic" commodities receiving supports was well below the national percentage: California, 11.7%; the national average, 21.0% \*
7. Relative importance of the 10 leading agricultural commodities in California:

<u>1930</u> (Value of #1 - \$98 million)			<u>1957</u> (Value of #1 - \$356 million)		
1	Oranges	100	1	Dairy	100
2	Dairy	92	2	Cattle	97
3	Cattle	52	3	Cotton	72
4	Eggs	46	4	Hay	43
5	Grapes	34	5	Grapes	40
6	Lemons	28	6	Eggs	39
7	Beans, dry	22	7	Oranges	27
8	Chickens	16	8	Tomatoes	25
9	Prunes	15	9	Lettuce	24
10	Cotton	15	10	Barley	22

\* Imperial Valley lettuce farmers have historically always resisted any Government subsidies even during very adverse marketing years.



8. California has 32 active state marketing order programs designed to "help farmers help themselves" in doing a better job of grading, marketing research, sales promotion, and distribution of farm products. The total value of all commodities having state marketing orders in 1958 amounted to \$400 million, or 41% of California's total cash receipts from farm marketing of fruit, truck, and potato.
9. California farm products account for more than one-third of the state's total railroad shipments.
10. About 45% of the value of agricultural production in California is in commodities shipped out of the state.

WHAT PROOF DO YOU HAVE THAT THE BRACERO PROGRAM DOES NOT DEPRESS RETAIL SPENDING TO THE MERCHANTS OF IMPERIAL VALLEY?

Imperial County was one of eight counties in Southern California which showed gains in taxable retail sales between 1957 and 1958. The other seven counties were San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Orange, San Diego, Ventura, Fresno and Riverside, according to a monthly summary of business conditions by the Research Department of the Security First National Bank. The report said Imperial County total sales in 1958 were \$64,508,000, a gain of .3 per cent over 1957. Brawley led all Valley cities with a gain of 3.3% and totaled \$12,961,000.

HAVE THE FARMERS AND MERCHANTS EVER JOINTLY DISCUSSED THE ECONOMIC EFFECT OF THE BRACERO PROGRAM?

Yes, at a very recent meeting during Farm-City Week, this was discussed in El Centro, and we were in complete agreement that the Bracero does a part of his spending here and sends part of his money home to Mexico, but that this flow of money has supported a higher level of retail spending by citizens of Mexicali here in the Imperial Valley and provided a larger volume of California exports to Mexico than otherwise would have been possible.

HAS THE BRACERO AND MEXICO BENEFITTED?

I believe that we have benefitted the Mexican National workers and the communities in Mexico to which they have returned. Also, at the same time, providing an important source of dollar exchange to the Mexican economy. Thus, while helping us, they are adding to the economic welfare of their own nation and selves, and maintaining their dignity in the society of free man by not asking for foreign aid and at the same time, being one of the world's largest importers of U.S. industrial goods and machinery.

HOUSING, LABOR CAMP AND FOOD

We have a completely modern labor camp construction of which, by far, exceeds the requirements as set forth by the Labor Department and the Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Housing, who constantly inspects such housing under the authority of Labor Code Title 8, Chapter 9 of the California Code. There are also key provisions

under Public Law 78 affecting Bracero living and working conditions such as:

1. That no bracero can be made to work in an area where Mexicans are discriminated against.
2. Work contracts must be of at least six weeks duration, and no longer than six months.
3. Housing must be sanitary and meet certain standards.
4. Employer-farmers must provide blankets and bedding and disability-medical insurance.

This camp also has a modern kitchen, completely air conditioned, tiled and stainless steel throughout and a modern chapel where regular services are held. I am proud to say that, in a press release to the San Diego Union dated 11 August 1959, the Labor Department praised this camp as one of the finest in the Nation, stating that it contains a series of cooled, stone-block barracks buildings, a similar mess hall and food preparation area, above-standard shower and sanitation facilities, and a combination recreation hall-chapel. The recreation hall is equipped with a television set.

I will also go on record as saying that food is important to the morale of our men and we are equally as proud of our food and the menu as we are of our camp and chapel facilities.

#### IMPERIAL VALLEY LETTUCE GROWER AS HE FACES MARKETING, TRANSPORTATION AND LABOR COMPETITION

A review of the following 5-year production and yield along with the market value of the Imperial Valley lettuce crop will indicate that a substantial profit was made in 1955; a substantial loss in 1956; and that losses over the \$500,000 mark was attained in 1957 and 1958, and that a \$61,000 profit was made in 1959. These figures are based on the following Federal-State Market News Table plus a weighted average growing cost of \$250.00 for production and 80¢ per carton for harvesting which is accepted by the California Winter Head Lettuce Advisory Board for such items.

#### S U M M A R Y

U.S. Department of Agriculture

California Department of Agriculture

#### V. ACREAGE, YIELD, AND PRODUCTION

TABLE 14. IMPERIAL VALLEY LETTUCE ACREAGE, YIELD, PRODUCTION AND VALUE 1955-1959

Year	Acreage Acres	Yield Cartons	Production 1000 Cartons	Value per Carton Dollars	Total Value 1000 Dollars
1955	28,500	414	11,800	1.70	20,060
1956	32,000	370	11,840	1.23	14,504
1957	33,500	350	11,724	1.45	17,000
1958	32,500	400	13,000	1.38	17,875
1959	36,250	387 a/	14,029 a/	1.60	19,370

Compiled by California Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, Sacramento, California.

a/ Includes 1,923,000 cartons not marketed and excluded from value computation. Harvested yield was 344 cartons per acre.

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PROFIT</u>	<u>LOSS</u>
1955	\$3,495,000	\$ -0-
1956	-0-	2,968,000
1957	-0-	754,000
1958	-0-	650,000
1959	61,000	-0-
	<u>\$3,556,000</u>	<u>\$4,372,000</u>

LAST 5-YEAR POSITION                      LOSS  
\$816,000.00

LAST 3-YEAR POSITION                      LOSS  
\$1,343,000.00

Imperial Valley lettuce faces primary competition interstate from Yuma, Arizona and to Eastern terminal markets from Florida and Texas. Texas is currently giving Imperial Valley the greatest known competition in the history of the lettuce deal from a standpoint of quality terminal lettuce. Both Florida and Texas have decided freight advantages to Eastern markets of consumption.

<u>CWT NEW YORK CITY FREIGHT ADVANTAGE</u>		
	<u>RATE</u>	<u>RELATIONSHIP PERCENTAGE TO CALIFORNIA</u>
Texas	\$1.92	123
Florida	1.52	100
CALIFORNIA	2.50	1.55

<u>TARIFF BASIS</u>			
<u>LETTUCE</u>			
TO:	NEW YORK		
	Rate per Cwt. 30,000# Min.	Refrigeration	Percentage Relationship
FROM: ARIZONA	2.40	121.67	150
CALIFORNIA	2.50	121.67	155
FLORIDA	1.52	104.19	100
TEXAS	1.92	114.07	123

Imperial Valley lettuce also faces a labor disadvantage from Texas and Florida farm labor as both of these states have lower farm wage rates than California.

FARM LABOR, January 1959	Crop Reporting Board, AMS, USDA
<u>RATE PER HOUR</u>	
Texas .....	.77
Florida .....	.77
California .....	1.15



## C O N C L U S I O N

I know that there are farmers, merchants, workers, members of the press and citizens who are here today to testify or to observe the testimony of others appearing before this Senate Committee. I am also aware of the fact that everyone who is here today must realize that agriculture, like industry, makes scientific progress, and because of this, we must recognize the fact that Imperial Valley no longer enjoys the supremacy on this winter lettuce market. Several years back, the Texas Agriculture Experimental Station started breeding work on a mildew-resistant lettuce seed known as Valverde seed. This year was the first year that large scale commercial planting of Valverde seed was grown. While the results were indeed gratifying to the farmers in the Rio Grande Valley, it hit us in the Imperial Valley like the "sputnik" when Texas lettuce started arriving for the first time in history in Eastern Terminal markets with comparable, if not better quality than that produced here in the Imperial Valley.

I feel that the evidence has already supported the fact that they enjoy a much lower rate of transportation to market than do the growers of lettuce in Imperial Valley. We also must recognize that they have a labor rate which is much lower than that of Imperial Valley lettuce farmers.

I am deeply concerned, but I have to be realistic enough to know that we no longer enjoy the monopoly and quality advantage which has historically been ours. I also know that in recent months, there has been a tremendous amount of pressure over the Mexican National Program. This program pressure did not let up until August 17, 1959, when the crop loss got so serious that the sour odor of rotting fruit hit the papers with screaming headlines "Shortage of Labor Causing Heavy Peach Harvest Loss."

I have read in the Imperial Valley Press of last night, that Mr. Clive Knowles, of the AFL CIO will testify here today relative to sanitary facilities for field workers in the Imperial Valley. I do not know what his testimony will be, but I would like to reserve the right of possibly making a short reply before this Committee. I do not want this to appear that I am opposing organized labor in any sense of the word. I believe and feel that the other farmers in the Imperial Valley should also believe that the things which require correcting should be corrected, and I do feel that in a democracy like ours, that should prevail without an atmosphere of suspense, suspicion or harassment. I am fully aware and very appreciative of the fact that organized labor today is the largest purchaser of farm products produced by the farmers of our nation. I do feel though, that the members of organized labor should also appreciate the fact that we farmers purchase more industrial commodities than the airlines, railroads and steam ship lines combined. We purchase 25% of all petroleum used in this country and of the 4 basic chemicals, we are the largest



users on two of these items.

With organized labor and industrial manufacturers enjoying the highest wages and earnings in the history on this nation, along with the fact that one out of every 3 railroad cars which leaves California is of agricultural nature, it can truly be said that agriculture has played the part for the great advantage which organized labor and its workers are now enjoying today.

I think that we should all agree that it is particularly remarkable when government statistics shows that agriculture today is in the position of having the lowest farm income in the last 19 years. I do believe though, that by mutual understanding of each others problems, we can attain beneficial results for the farmers, workers and citizens of our community and that is possible today under our precious American heritage where free men enjoy the rights of freedom.

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA    )  
                              ) ss  
COUNTY OF IMPERIAL    )

DANNY DANENBERG, known to me personally appeared before me this 14th day of January and solemnly swore that the foregoing statements are true and correct to the best of his knowledge.

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Notary Public in and for said  
County and State

Annual average farm wage rates and index numbers, by states and regions, 1958 <sup>1/</sup>

STATE and REGION	PER MONTH		PER WEEK		PER DAY			PER HOUR		COMPOSITE RATE PER HOUR	INDEXES OF COMPOSITE RATES 1910-14-100
	WITH HOUSE	WITH BOARD and ROOM	WITH BOARD and ROOM	WITHOUT BOARD or ROOM	WITH HOUSE	WITH BOARD and ROOM	WITHOUT BOARD or ROOM	WITH HOUSE	WITHOUT BOARD or ROOM		
	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	Dol.	
Maine	194.00	144.00	36.25	51.75			8.90		1.03	.906	546
N.H.	197.00	144.00	39.25	54.50			9.30		1.08	.949	624
Vt.	182.00	145.00	36.25	49.00			8.80		1.10	.906	596
Mass.	208.00	154.00	45.00	58.00			9.90		1.21	1.035	676
R.I.	215.00	158.00	45.75	59.75			10.00		1.19	1.044	725
Conn.	216.00	158.00	45.50	59.50			10.20		1.27	1.072	739
NewEng	199.00	149.00	40.00	54.00			9.40		1.12	.964	630
N.Y.	198.00	139.00	36.75	50.75			8.90		1.11	.881	547
N.J.	215.00	155.00	40.00	52.75			9.40		1.14	.928	663
Pa.	175.00	126.00	33.25	44.75			7.90		1.02	.799	644
MidAtl	192.00	137.00	36.00	49.00			8.60		1.09	.859	601
Ohio	167.00	125.00				6.50	8.00		1.06	.794	602
Ind.	165.00	120.00				6.00	7.60		1.03	.769	606
Ill.	187.00	145.00				7.20	8.80		1.08	.843	624
Mich.	195.00	130.00				6.70	8.50		1.06	.822	591
Wis.	184.00	137.00				6.60	8.50		1.06	.821	562
ENCent	180.00	132.00				6.60	8.30		1.05	.810	596
Minn	176.00	139.00				7.50	9.40		1.10	.881	558
Iowa	184.00	149.00				7.90	9.60		1.09	.898	548
Mo.	144.00	108.00				5.50	7.00		.94	.713	637
N Dak.	182.00	152.00				7.00	8.90		1.04	.850	489
S Dak.	174.00	140.00				6.80	8.50		1.03	.823	499
Nebr.	192.00	145.00				7.20	9.10		1.04	.859	573
Kans.	182.00	140.00				7.50	9.30		1.08	.876	701
WNCent	173.00	135.00				7.00	8.70		1.04	.835	576
Del.						6.70	8.70	.91	.97	.896	822
Md.						6.10	7.60	.89	.98	.848	857
Va.						5.00	6.10	.64	.77	.656	729
W.Va.						4.55	5.60	.66	.73	.615	488
N.C.						4.65	5.60	.58	.65	.582	669
S.C.						3.35	3.90	.43	.48	.420	568
Ga.						3.90	4.50	.54	.61	.506	575
Fla.						5.60	6.10	.64	.77	.658	671
SoAtl.						4.65	5.30	.60	.68	.583	655
Ky.						4.10	5.10	.60	.76	.591	558
Tenn.						3.60	4.40	.48	.60	.497	502
Ala.						3.70	4.30	.50	.57	.494	543
Miss.						3.60	4.00	.47	.56	.475	511
ESCent						3.75	4.40	.51	.60	.507	523
Ark.						4.80	5.30	.58	.66	.599	560
La.						4.40	4.80	.54	.62	.554	583
Okla.						6.50	7.70	.82	.91	.836	638
Tex.						5.70	6.50	.68	.77	.714	590
WSCent						5.40	6.10	.65	.74	.676	598
Mont.	210.00	169.00					8.90		1.10	.879	460
Idaho	236.00	186.00					10.00		1.14	.960	561
Wyo.	211.00	155.00					8.80		1.10	.868	464
Colo.	204.00	155.00					8.80		1.01	.843	573
NMex.	174.00	128.00					6.60		.80	.673	575
Ariz.	242.00	174.00					8.30		.90	.858	584
Utah	219.00	192.00					9.10		1.13	.934	595
Nev.	237.00	166.00					9.10		1.17	.934	519
Mount.	216.00	164.00					8.50		.99	.847	536
Wash.	253.00	202.00						1.17	1.26	1.221	601
Ore.	233.00	181.00						1.10	1.17	1.128	561
Calif.	269.00	205.00						1.07	1.15	1.133	529
Pacif.	264.00	202.00						1.09	1.17	1.145	543
U.S.	176.00	137.00	33.75	42.50	4.80	6.10	6.00	.82	.92	.757	582

<sup>1/</sup> Weighted average of five quarters

BOORUM & PEASE "NOTER"®

BOORUM

J. E. MCINTYRE

January 5, 1960

Honorable James A. Cobey, Chairman  
and Members of Senate Fact Finding Committee  
on Labor and Welfare  
413 State Capitol  
Sacramento 14, California

Attention: Mr. Andrew W. Oppmann, Jr.  
Executive Secretary

Re: Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare

Dear Senator Cobey:

May I thank you and the members of your committee for notifying us of the hearing on farm labor problems in the desert areas embracing Riverside County and Imperial County and your invitation to participate in this meeting.

It is my understanding that the committee is particularly concerned with the dependence of agricultural workers on General Relief and Aid to Needy Children, and is desirous of determining counties' policies regarding granting of relief when seasonal agricultural work is available.

May I commend the committee for this study. I feel it is timely as there is a lack of information relative to the impact of these problems as far as Welfare programs are concerned. I know of no formal study regarding this subject matter, conducted either by the State Department of Social Welfare or the counties of California, which would supply factual quantitative data to show conclusively the impact of imported foreign farm workers - "Braceros" - on California's Welfare programs. For many years, of course, many counties of California have been concerned with the impact of domestic farm labor problems and probably individual counties have had much more familiarity with this general subject than with the problem of imported foreign farm labor.

I have attempted to secure some information concerning this subject matter from two of our district operating offices which embrace most of the area you outline as being within the scope of your study. Our district office in Indio serves Indio, Coachella, Mecca and Palm Springs, while our Blythe office serves the Palo Verde area.

The Coachella Valley, as a primary agricultural area, relies in part on migrant workers, both domestic and foreign, for the harvesting of the seasonal crops. For the most part, crops are harvested year-around in this area and, except for a very short period, there is always farm work of some type available. The only exception to this general rule occurs when weather prevents the agricultural work. In other words, at times, when it rains or freezes, there



is a work stoppage. In this area, reference to migrant workers usually means farm laborers working in vegetables and cotton. The grape and date harvests are handled, in the main, by local farm workers skilled in this work. The lowest cycle of the year for migrant workers in Coachella appears to be from about the middle of April to the middle of July. This cycle actually extends to the middle of November for those not working in cotton, a crop that pays very little to harvest unless you are very experienced in picking cotton. The big influx in this area by domestic migrant workers is about the middle of November and most of these leave by the middle of April to go North to work in the fruit. Our foreign migrant workers, mostly Mexican Nationals, commonly referred to as "Braceros", are here only under contract to an employer. The employer of a Mexican National is responsible for providing room and board at a nominal cost and the farm laborer is covered by State Compensation Insurance for on-the-job injuries. We understand the Bracero is required by the terms of the contract to pay insurance premiums regularly for sickness, hospitalization and injuries on-the-job, so no public assistance is necessary for him for medical care.

The main connection that the foreign migrant worker has with the Welfare agency is that he adds to the number of children requiring assistance under our General Relief and Aid to Needy Children programs. The situation seems similar to the type of situation where military troops are quartered in foreign countries. These men do not have their wives or families with them and results appear to be inevitable. We are told that many mothers receiving assistance under the Aid to Needy Children program become pregnant by these men but that also some of the unmarried younger girls have a similar experience. In a few instances, the men will marry the woman and this usually requires the Welfare Department to set up a stepfather case as the income of the farm laborer is usually insufficient to meet the needs of the stepchildren, even in part. Usually, however, the men will return to Mexico and it becomes virtually impossible to locate them, let alone secure any support from them for their dependents.

Approximately 25% of the Aid to Needy Children caseload in the Indio district is comprised of cases in which there is an absent migrant father. About 5% of these cases have two or more absent migrant fathers. When we realize that the Indio district includes the Palm Springs area and other non-agricultural areas where absent fathers are not farm laborers, the actual percentage of absent migrant fathers in the agricultural area becomes even larger, approximating 30%. The mothers and children in these situations receive their medical care through either the Medical Care program, administered by the department, or through facilities offered at the Riverside County General Hospital. Very little General Relief is necessary for the foreign migrant worker him self, but assistance is often rendered to those whom he leaves dependent.

In contrast to the foreign migrant worker, the department is also concerned with the domestic migrant worker. There is a comparatively small percentage of absent domestic migrant fathers whose children receive Aid to Needy Children.

However, we do have a great demand for emergency assistance for this group. The large percentage of requests comes not when farm jobs are few but during the good harvest seasons. This results because the domestic migrant usually arrives at his destination without funds or food so that immediate assistance is necessary. Most farm jobs are payable at the end of the day's work but many times the department will be asked for emergency assistance in the form of gasoline in order for the farm worker to have transportation to the outlying ranches where work is available. Technically, most of the domestic migrant farm workers do not have county residence and are therefore not eligible for county assistance. Riverside County has, however, provided emergency assistance to families in these situations when other local resources were unable to meet the needs of this group. Such resources as the food bank or assistance from private agencies are often available, thus eliminating the need for the county to offer emergency aid. However, in the absence of other local resources, Riverside County would extend emergency assistance to families, on a short-term basis. Housing for this group often poses a difficult problem as the worker usually is without funds or has very minimum funds to purchase housing, even low-cost housing such as could be provided in the Farm Labor Camp.

To meet the medical needs of this group, there are clinics available in this area, operated by the Riverside County Health Department; these are the Well Baby Clinic and the Pre-natal Clinic. In cases of need for hospitalization, the Riverside County General Hospital is 75 miles away, and hence medical problems of hospitalization may become a problem to local hospitals. The Riverside County General Hospital has certain local hospitals under contract for the emergency hospitalization of indigents, so there is some relief to the local hospitals as far as this problem is concerned. This is not an area of competence for me, and I would therefore not want to enlarge on the medical problems of this group in this area.

The Department of Employment in India and Farm Labor offices have been most cooperative in advising the Welfare Department of available farm jobs and in assisting in the referral of migrants to such employment.

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In the area served by our Blythe office, a somewhat similar report can be made. During the last three months, of 73 persons filing requests for General Relief, 29 were migratory workers. During the months of January and February, we anticipate that this workload will increase and that approximately 75% of the persons seeking General Relief will be migratory workers.

In the Aid to Needy Children caseload in our Blythe office, there are nine children who are in need as a result of desertion by migratory workers; five of these are children of Mexican Nationals who have returned to Mexico.

We understand from the local private medical clinic and the local hospital that their principal problems with migratory workers occur because of emergency confinements where no prior medical history is available to the doctor and because of the health problems posed by the fact that these people often live in a tent or a car (and usually these families are large families with many small children), thus adding to the danger of infections of various kinds.

The local Employment Office advised us that they process applications from 30 to 100 domestic workers a day, and that the Employment Representative estimated that from three to five of these applicants had had car breakdowns, necessitating car repair or funds for gasoline.

The School Department reported that one of the big problems is truancy of children from migratory families. They felt that this resulted primarily from the children's embarrassment over lack of money for school lunches, inadequate clothing and inability to maintain any personal appearance. The children of these workers often are placed in a grade lower than their age level because of the irregularity of their past school attendance and also because so many of these children, due to malnutrition, appear to be lethargic and show little interest in school work. We understand that most children of migratory workers seldom receive education beyond the seventh grade.

It would appear from the reports received from our Indio and Blythe offices that undoubtedly the importation of foreign farm workers and migrant domestic farm labor contributes materially to the problems of the community in which these people are employed. Undoubtedly the Welfare Department receives considerable impact from these groups in terms of requirements for assistance grants and the need for casework services in the community.

It would appear further that, in some regards, the imported farm laborer often is better off financially than the migrant domestic farm laborer, as his contract provides protections that are not assured the domestic migrant farm laborer.

In conclusion, may I thank the committee for its indulgence in making available to me the necessary time for this report, and express my regrets that I do not have more conclusive statistical data to present as I was unable to secure such data on short notice. I would recommend that perhaps a more formal study be undertaken throughout the counties of California to develop more concrete and definitive data regarding the subject being studied by the committee.

Respectfully submitted,

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY

/s/ John E. McIntyre,  
John E. McIntyre, Director

BOORI

BOORUM & PEASE - NORFOLK

E. P. BOYDEN



THE SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE  
ON  
LABOR AND WELFARE

Gentlemen:

Welfare problems and the problem of farm labor seem to have no concrete, identifiable relationship in Imperial County. Most farm labor appears to be done by full time domestic employees plus the seasonal services of Braceros.

The families of the domestic farm laborers are subject to the same vicissitudes as any other labor group. Some of them become needy for the same reasons as some families in any other unskilled occupational groups. There does not appear to be any direct connection with this specific occupation.

The wage earner becomes old, ill, incapacitated or deserts or dies. Then, just as in any other low income, unskilled occupational groups, the family applies for and usually needs aid. They are usually uneducated and live on a very low socio-economic level without property or other resources or skills. But this is true of unskilled labor groups in general. The only difference is that there is a higher proportion of farm labor in the labor force than there would be in an industrial area.

All health and welfare facilities are available to agricultural workers and their families just as they are to other residents.

The chief difference is the lack of occupational diversification such as may be found in an industrial or manufacturing area.

There are few opportunities for the employment of uneducated and unskilled women and there is very little "light work" for men who may no longer be physically able to do farm labor. This is not the fault of agriculture but is due to the particular industrial economy that exists in Imperial County. Some types of factory work could relieve this situation.

But in spite of this being a "single industry" area, the relief rate in Imperial County is not high as compared to other counties of the State.

The number of Old Age recipients per 1000 persons over 65 is less than the average for the State. The number of children receiving ANC per 1000 children under 18 is about even with the State average. The number of cases receiving General Relief per 1000 inhabitants is 1/3 less than the State average.

The Braceros do not call upon the facilities of the Welfare Department. Their needs appear to be met under the provisions of their contract. There are, however, fringe effects which have nothing to do with the nature of their employment but simply have to do with their nature as a group of men away from home. Some women do apply for aid on account of illegitimate children fathered by

THE SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND WELFARE

Braceros who have already returned to Mexico. This is not, however, a major problem and is as much the fault of resident women as it is of the Braceros.

Agricultural employment is a very valuable resource to the Welfare Department in the case of transients. Able-bodied transients often apply for aid. The Farm Labor Office keeps the Department regularly informed in regard to labor needs in the various crops. Applicants are regularly referred to these jobs. The Farm Labor Office, and the Imperial Valley Farmers Assoc. have been most cooperative in offering jobs to these applicants.

If an able-bodied applicant needs aid until he receives his first pay, temporary assistance is given. Rarely is there any serious problem with the able-bodied person who really wants work.

Respectfully submitted by,

E. P. Boyden, Director

IMPERIAL COUNTY WELFARE DEPARTMENT

EPB:mc



*Copy*

BEFORE THE CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE COMMITTEE HEARING ON THE AGRICULTURE LABOR PROGRAM, EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 15, 1960, IMPERIAL COUNTY COURT HOUSE.

WE RESPECTFULLY SUBMIT THE FOLLOWING REPORT TO THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE INTEREST IN THIS MATTER. IN IT THE FIGURES SUBMITTED ARE DOCUMENTED AND TEND TO SHOW A GENERAL INCREASE IN THE BUSINESS VOLUME OF OUR COMMERCIAL ECONOMY WHILE THE POPULATION OF THE COUNTY HAS REMAINED RATHER STATIC.

CALEXICO HAS TWO METHODS OF MEASURING ITS BUSINESS VOLUME. ITS CITY BUSINESS LICENSE IS PROVIDED FOR BY A REVENUE PRODUCING ORDINANCE AND THE FEES ARE BASED ON BUSINESS VOLUME. REPORTS ON THE TAX RECEIPTS FROM THE SALE OF TAXABLE MERCHANDISE IS ALSO ANOTHER FAIRLY ACCURATE METHOD OF NOTING BUYING TRENDS. THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE TABLE BELOW WAS TAKEN FROM THE CITY OF CALEXICO'S ANNUAL STATEMENTS.

FISCAL YEAR	OCCUPATION LICENSE	SALES TAX
1950-51	15,425.35	71,065.35
51-52	18,471.37	90,209.50
52-53	22,454.70	112,082.50
53-54	25,688.29	116,840.61
54-55	26,359.46	113,964.22
55-56	24,305.80	117,478.03
56-57	22,045.53	117,455.69
57-58	29,481.37	123,444.73
58-59	27,839.34	129,030.80

PLEASE NOTE WHAT SEEMS TO BE A DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THE OCCUPATION LICENSE INCOME AND SALES TAX RECEIPTS AS REPORTED IN FISCAL YEAR 1958-59 AND COMPARING THOSE FIGURES WITH THOSE OF 1957-58. THE CITY REVAMPED ITS ORDINANCE ON OCCUPATION LICENSES TO CORRECT SEVERAL IRREGULARITIES IN ITS APPLICATION. AS A RESULT, MANY REPORTING FIRMS HAD CONSIDERABLY LESS FEES TO PAY AND THE CITY ACTUALLY ESTIMATED A REDUCTION OF OVER \$2,000.00 IN THE FIRST YEAR OF NEWLY APPLIED ASSESSMENTS.

WITH THE ADJUSTED AND EQUALIZED OCCUPATION LICENSE ORDINANCE IN EFFECT FOR THE LAST REPORTING YEAR BOTH THE RETURNS FROM THESE FEES AND THE 1% SALES TAX SHOW A REMARKABLE SIMILARITY IN PERCENTILE OF INCREASE FROM 1950-51 THROUGH 1958-59. THERE HAS BEEN A 55.39% INCREASE IN THE LICENSE FEES AND A 54.26% INCREASE IN THE TAXABLE SALES AS RECORDED ON THE AUDITED ANNUAL INCOME STATEMENTS OF THE CITY OF CALEXICO.

THIS CONTINUED GROWTH IS ALL THE MORE REMARKABLE IN THAT THE MEXICALI VALLEY HAS LOST AN ESTIMATED \$30,000,000.00 IN PURCHASING POWER IN THE LAST 3 YEARS. THE WORLD PRICE OF COTTON, THE FOUNDATION OF THEIR ECONOMY HAS FALLEN IN EXCESS OF 20% DURING THIS PERIOD. THE 1959-60 COTTON SEASON LOST OVER 100,000 ACRES OF COTTON BY A REDUCTION OF PLANTING IN THOSE ACRES.



THIS ALONE REPRESENTS NEARLY \$15,000,00.00 IN LOST INCOME FOR THIS CROP SEASON.

EL CENTRO, THE LARGEST CITY OF IMPERIAL COUNTY HAS SIMILAR DOCUMENTED FIGURES ON SALES TAX RECEIPTS SHOWING A TREND OF CONTINUED CLIMB IN BUSINESS VOLUME. AGAIN, IT IS TO BE REMEMBERED THAT THE TOTAL COUNTY POPULATION FIGURES HAVE NOT KEPT PACE WITH THIS GROWTH AND HAVE REMAINED FAIRLY STATIC AS NOTED IN THE STEWART WALSH REPORT SUBMITTED TO THE COUNTY OF IMPERIAL IN 1957 AND A REPORT ENTITLED "POPULATION TRENDS TO 1980" AS PREPARED BY THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT OF THE LOS ANGELES CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. THE POPULATION INCREASE OF ONLY 8,100 PEOPLE IN THE 10 YEAR PERIOD BETWEEN 1950 AND 1960 WOULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR THE MORE STARTLING GROWTH IN BUSINESS VOLUME REPORTED FOR THAT SAME DECADE.

## Sales Management Shows El Centro's Buying Power

Effective Buying Income	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958
Per Family	\$ 5,957	\$ 5,752	\$ 5,864	\$ 6,167	\$ 6,316	\$ 6,260
Net Dollars	25,020,000	26,458,000	27,563,000	29,602,000	33,474,000	33,803,000
Per Capita	1,762	1,675	1,701	1,805	1,839	1,817
Retail Sales in Food	4,609,000	5,221,000	6,439,000	6,935,000	7,096,000	7,503,000
Retail Sales in General Merchandise	1,999,000	2,189,000	4,305,000	4,694,000	4,523,000	4,720,000
Retail Sales in Drug Stores	979,000	1,120,000	1,264,000	1,439,000	1,392,000	1,464,000
Retail Sales in Furniture, Household and Radio	641,000	710,000	1,657,000	1,789,000	1,765,000	1,753,000
Retail Sales in Automotive	9,486,000	10,005,000	10,599,000	10,257,000	10,927,000	9,652,000
TOTAL RETAIL SALES	32,122,000	35,604,000	40,813,000	43,100,000	42,407,000	42,429,000
Quality of Market Index	140	139	141	143	133	140

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA HAS KEPT AND PREPARED STATISTICS FOR MANY YEARS ON THE BUSINESS VOLUMES OF EACH COUNTY AND MAJOR CITIES. THESE REPORTS ARE ISSUED QUARTERLY AND ARE AVAILABLE FOR STUDY. THOSE PREPARING THIS REPORT ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO ANSWER TO THE METHODS USED BY THE STATE ON HOW THEIR REPORTS ARE DOCUMENTED AND PREPARED. BUT, THEY TOO CAN GIVE A FAIRLY ACCURATE PICTURE OF THE COMMERCIAL TRADE VOLUME IN SPECIFIC AREAS AND LOCALITIES.

*Philip J. West*  
*Secy. gen.*

**CALEXICO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
**P. O. Box 948**  
**Calexico, California**

D. M. STILL

# CALIFORNIA MIGRANT MINISTRY

Division of Home Missions - National Council of Churches

3330 W. ADAMS BLVD., LOS ANGELES 18, CALIFORNIA • REpublic 2-0181



REV. DOUGLAS M. STILL  
Director

January 15, 1960

Honorable James A. Cobey, Chairman  
Members, Senate Fact Finding Committee  
on Labor & Welfare  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, California

Gentlemen:

The California Migrant Ministry is deeply gratified that the California Senate has undertaken to study the needs of farm laborers and their families. I am certain that field visits to areas where farm workers live and work will do more to demonstrate the great needs of this segment of our society than any words and/or other witnesses can convey. But I appreciate the opportunity to speak in behalf of seasonal farm laborers as a representative of the Northern and Southern Calif. Councils of Churches and in behalf of the National Council of Churches.

The Migrant Ministry has provided a field service of religious and social welfare programming in migrant camps in California for the past twenty-five years. At the present time we have staff working in Imperial, Kern, Kings, Tulare, Fresno, Merced, and Santa Clara Counties. These staff members have just completed a survey of approximately 200 migrant families. This survey was designed to help us give you a first-hand, up-to-the-minute account of presently existing problems faced by the seasonal farm laborers in California. (Copies of the data on which the following generalized conclusions are drawn are appended.)

The major problem of farm workers in California is poor pay and under-employment. Uniformly this is the workers complaint. On the best days of the working year, pay received by our sample did not average out much more than \$1.00 an hour. On the worst days, pay often averaged 50¢ an hour or less. When the whole family works, the gross family income rises appreciably, but the average hourly pay per person is still low. In the town of East Mendota, a survey there this summer showed that the average annual family income was less than \$2,000.00 per year. Drs. Beatty, Pickford, and Brigham of Fresno State College in their study of the migrant problem in Fresno County (released this fall 1959) concluded:

"The study team cannot present conclusive data on income level of farm labor families; however, we do feel that there is ample indication that the income derived annually by a vast majority of farm labor families is totally inadequate to maintain anything like a minimum-subsistence level of living standard."

It ought to be pointed out that the families interviewed by the Migrant Ministry for this report on the whole -- are the most responsible, dependable, and stable group of seasonal farm workers. Most of them - like most of our present seasonal farm working force in California - are becoming more and more stable - more and more permanent. The trend is definitely one where the majority of families are settling down in communities and making a place for themselves in the communities. They have a stake in these communities. They are working hard to perpetuate their investment. Of the families recently interviewed: of 180 families; 121 stayed over for the winter where they were; 28 planned to move to a different state; and 8 planned to move to a different county within the state. At their home bases of 177 persons; 38 were purchasing homes; 79 would rent a house; 10 would live with relatives; and 33 would live in grower provided housing. The majority of these families feel that their future is in securing a home and finding permanent employment.

These families, like most American families, are child centered. Of 34 Anglo families interviewed the average number of children was 3.4; of Spanish-speaking families, 5.48 children on the average; and of Negro families, 6.9 children on the average. These children do not work in farm labor as much as do the children of more migrating parents -- of 881 children, 109 worked "sometimes", and 39 of the children were said to work "full-time" -- a description, I believe, to mean all day when school is out and work is available. Of the families who indicated that the children worked, we found that children from three years old and up were indicated to have worked.

I believe that if rural youth felt that they could earn enough money by working in agriculture that, as these figures intimate, a larger labor force might be tapped to do needed work than now seems to be available.

Low annual income is the bane of the existence of farm workers and their families in California. But, and partly because, their income is so low, they are plagued by many other problems: all the problems that go with abject poverty and the resulting low status conferred by the community and the resulting low level of self respect.

Housing is bad; sanitation terrible; health is undermined by bad diets, poor water, and exposure; transportation is often unsafe and certainly uncomfortable; education is not as readily available or so easily assimilated due to the conditions of life and work. Pre-school children are totally inadequately cared for; and in our wealthy state, there is a total lack of planning for child-care centers for children of seasonal farm workers.

Seasonal farm workers and their families have desperate needs for every type of social welfare service which can be described. Unfortunately, they are being reached inadequately by these services, largely because they are not available in rural areas, or because these families are not qualified for them. Because normal and typical services are not available for these families - an attempt to plan welfare services to meet their needs would fill volumes. Basically, a large proportion of these needs would not be nearly so radical if farm workers were able to earn enough income to maintain a decent minimum standard of life.

In assessing their own future, farm workers have indicated that they want:



Their own house, property or farm;  
Higher wages and a better living;  
Steady work;  
Education for the children -NO farm work for them;  
Stay in one place-kids in school;  
Better housing;  
More purchasing power;  
Better and more food and clothing;  
Better health service.

In assessing how their lives might best be made better they have declared they need:

Better wages;  
Better housing;  
Stable employment;  
Limit Mexican-Nationals;  
Organize a union for farm workers;  
Oppose mechanization;  
Eliminate the labor contractors;  
Provide better sanitation;  
Provide better working conditions;  
Provide Unemployment Compensation.

The National Council of Churches, and the California Migrant Ministry, and the Board of the Southern California Council of Churches, and the Board of the Northern California Council of Churches urge then a minimum wage law for farm labor be adopted. These groups also urge that every effort be made to provide equal services and benefits to seasonal farm laborers as have been made available to labor in general. Your effort in behalf of remedial legislation is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,

*Douglas M. Still*  
Douglas M. Still



## FARM LABOR EXPERIENCE SURVEY

During December 1959, the staff of the Migrant Ministry interviewed approximately two hundred families whose main source of livelihood is from seasonal farm labor. We wanted to be able present to this Committee in an objective, first-hand manner just what are the typical problems of seasonal farm laboring families. The families who make up the bulk of those interviewed were not picked by random sample. For the most part they are families who have been known by our staff for some time. They have been selected as being more or less representative of "typical" domestic seasonal farm workers. Most of them are attempting to settle down after having been more itinerant as seasonal farm workers. Most of these workers have families and are attempting to provide a more wholesome life for them.

These surveys were taken in the areas of San Jose, Dos Palos, Mendota, Corcoran, Visalia, Richgrove, Bakersfield, Wasco, and Brawley. A copy of the survey form has been given to Committee Counsel for your record.

### Size of families:

- Of 34 Anglo families - the average number of children was 3.4;
- Of 120 Spanish-speaking families - the average number of children was 5.48;
- Of 22 Negro families - the average number of children was 6.9.

In asking about child labor, of the 881 children involved - 109 of the children worked "sometimes". Among these children were those of three and four years old. 3.9 of the children were reported as working full-time. The ages of these children went as low as seven.

In asking about the level of education attained by the adults, we found that 31% did not go beyond the third grade and 61% did not go beyond the sixth grade. Only 12% have finished the 12th grade.

Most of the families interviewed were renting their present dwelling... 93 out of 180; 34 were purchasing their dwelling; 47 had it provided by a grower free.

Of those interviewed: 121 wintered-over at the place where they were interviewed; 28 planned to move to a different state; and 8 planned to move to a different county within the state. 14 families indicated that no place was "home". The bulk of these families either owned a home or rent a home at their winter base. Only 33 planned to live in grower provided housing.

Of those interviewed: among 237 workers; 199 worked at farm work at the home base; only 6 took jobs in industry; 20 would seek jobs among the service industries. Only 4 indicated that they would not work at all. Of the 180 interviews - only 49 indicated they worked at non-farm work.

Out of 153 questionnaires, 57 families stayed in the same place year around; 24 moved once intrastate, 20 move twice intrastate, and 19 moved three

times interstate.

Of the 49 questionnaires indicating non-farm work was secured -- 3 worked for less than \$40 per week; 10 for \$40-50 per week; 6 for \$50-60 per week; 6 for \$60-70 per week; 6 for \$70-80 per week; 3 for \$80-90 per week; 2 for \$90 - 100 per week; 3 received more than \$100 per week.

Of 228 workers, only 55 make work arrangements in advance through a farmer; 29 through employment service; 8 through a recruiter; 56 through a contractor; and 63 just go looking for jobs.

In asking for information on the highest amount received for a days pay, we found quite a spread --complicated by the fact that often 2-5 workers contributed to the total days pay. Among single work records, the highest pay received for 9 hours work by 16 people was \$10.50; for 11 hours work by 24 people was \$11.80; for 13 hours work by 19 people was \$14.60.

We found that the lowest days pay was sometimes worked at very low hourly rates indeed - often averaging less than 50¢ per hour. The statistical data given to the Committee bear out this experience.

We found that the vast majority of workers were paid either in cash or by check. Only two persons reported that they were paid by having credit extended to them; four persons were paid in scrip; six with tickets.

In asking about the schooling of children, we found that 5 out of 132 families had school age children who were not enrolled in school. Only 86 indicated that their children were "always" enrolled; 12 answered "most of the time"; 11 "sometimes"; 1 - "never".

Most of these families children (78) attended just one school; 28 attended two schools; 11 attended three schools; two attended 4 schools; 1 attended more than four schools.

Of 119 families asked - 3 enrolled their children only after authorities had requested them to be enrolled.

The vast majority of these families feel that it is extremely important for their children to complete high school; or to receive "all of the education they can." 19 indicated that post high school education is important and desire it for their children.

Asked about the care of preschool youngsters when the mother worked-the most frequent answer was that older children cared for the youngest in the home (or camp) 30; or that the children were taken to the fields - 28; or hired a baby-sitter - 7.

Asked whether the children were ever placed in a nursery or day care center - only two out of 98 answered "yes". There was a general high regard for the need of child care centers.



HEALTH

Childbirth - of 45 births recorded - 7 were at home; 4 had a midwife present; two a doctor or nurse.

In discussing their health needs, these families felt that they needed: better housing; better sanitation; cleaner surroundings; more knowledge of health and sanitation; more money for better food; free clinics; closer clinics; free hospitals and closer hospitals; better clothes; etc.

WELFARE

When asked about their needs, 54 replies indicated that they had no sudden need for money, food, or shelter. Those who replied that they suddenly had needs they could not meet-(121) turned to various agencies for help; borrowed money from friends or family - 37; "saw it thru" -14; secured credit at stores - 3; welfare department - 21; A.N.C. -2; mortgaged house - 3; borrowed from bank - 3; finance company - 5; moved to new area - 6; sold car 1; stole - 1; private agency aid - 15.

In assessing their future, these families want:

Their own house, property, or farm (53)  
 Higher wages - better living (32)  
 Steady work (34)  
 Education for children - NO farm work for them (28)  
 Stay in one place - kids in school (25)  
 Better housing (23)  
 More purchasing power (6)  
 Better & more food - and clothing (8)  
 Better health (6)  
 Nothing much different (12)

How best to improve conditions for farm workers?

Better wages	89
Better housing	36
Stable employment	39
Limit braceros	23
Organize a union	14
Oppose mechanization	10
Eliminate contractors	4
Better sanitation	3
Better working conditions	3
Unemployment Compensation	6

## ANEC DOT AL    RECORD

### GENERAL FINANCIAL ATTITUDES

"The children keep the money they make (on the crops) themselves and use it for school and clothes." (Kings County)

"Husband was put in jail for drunken driving--6 months sentence." The wife and five children are living in a cold cabin. County welfare gave them flour, corn meal, and canned milk. Two children of school age cannot attend school because they have no shoes or coats. Alfonso has an open burn wound on his leg (infection may have set in) and open sores on his neck. A doctor has not been consulted. Mrs. Aleman does not drive and therefore has no way to get to the clinic. (Kings County)

"We don't have automobile, - couldn't keep up payments when I was out of work. Pay someone to take me to store for groceries. Must go to work with someone, and now work is so bad so I won't be able to get another car. I guess I will have to keep depending on relatives and friends for transportation." (Kings Co)

"Why aren't you in school?" (to 12 year old boy)

"I had to get junk to sell so my mother could have some money. Dad drinks up all of his money and doesn't give her any for us kids. He buys drinks for the others, too."

"Did you find any junk to sell?"

"Yeah, I found some. I got 60 cents for it."

"Does your mother have enough money now?"

"Well -- 60 cents." (Kings County)

In Mississippi, family lived on ranch for eleven years -- "worked cotton" -- house was provided -- farmer brought food, "marked it down in book" -- never got money for picking cotton -- owed all (and more) to farmer. But at Christmas farmer would bring them \$25 or more -- only cash they ever had. (Santa Clara County)

She didn't send the three older girls to high school because someone said it was too expensive. A nurse said she'd help the family to send the girls, but she didn't come back. "Did you go to school?" (asked of the mother)--"No." (Santa Clara County)

"What did you do when you needed money - had none?"

"Borrowed from finance company - borrowed \$50 for a year and they charged \$5.50 for a year. I paid it back \$7 a month - paid back \$70 altogether when it was done. That wasn't bad as my pick-up. I gave \$465 for a pick-up and the finance company charged me \$200 for financing it. I bought a second-hand refrigerator for \$33 and it didn't work so I called up the man I bought it from. He came down and replaced a switch and charged me \$16. I refused to pay and now he's brought suit against me and I've got to go to court and will probably have to pay because he's a big man and I'm only a little guy." (Indio)

"While we can still work we are barely able to support ourselves. Children can't go to school - have to work to help feed the family." (Kings County)

Anecdotal Record  
(Financial Attitudes)

- 2 -

"We are getting the same pay per ton (\$10) for prunes as we were 10 years ago and we are paying three time higher for life. In 1942, I picked string beans around San Jose at 70¢ per 30 pound basket and I had to travel 40 miles to work and leave all my small children in the car while I, my wife, and 4 boys were picking 7 hours to make \$24.00." (Santa Clara County)

"If they'd just pay a little more 'cause groceries are too high. I have to buy clothes for the girls -- I have no dresses at all." (Tulare County)

"It's hard, not having enough money when your children are in school. They need money for so many things for school and they see the other children with things. That's why children get into devilment, steal, and stuff. I've told my kids I share my part with them and that's all I can do. If we ever get an extra two or three dollars I saves it for them instead of getting something for myself or the house. It sure would help to have a little more money." (Indio)

"One year we earned \$5100. That's 5100 hours we had to put in. Think of what guys who work at 8 hours a day get." (Tulare County)

"Went to welfare and they refused to help because father was able to work. Guess they figured I should go break in somewhere and take something. There's no work anywhere. We got no way to find it. People with cars charge \$1 a ride and that is a lot. They ought to do something about these poor people. They're plenty of people who need things." (Kings County)

"Union guys can get enough money to feed their families proper. On our \$1 an hour you can't afford nothin' but beans and potatoes." (Tulare County)

"I don't understand my Social Security. I wanted to know who turned in Social Security for me. I got a list of every person who paid Social Security and Whitey Lancaster hasn't turned in any. I told the Social Security people about it. But they haven't done anything. I haven't kept any record of my wages. Social Security is very unfair." (Kern County - Lamont)

"Last year when it was raining and there wasn't no work, I went over to welfare in Hanford (20 miles away) to ask for food for my 7 children and they told me to come back the next day and I did and there were too mny people and they couldn't see me and I went back the next day and it was the same story and so I gave up 'cause it was hard for the people who was takin' me to carry me over to Hanford." (Kings County)

"You work 3-4 days and then you're off a month or so. I'd rather be working than sitting around. We're in danger of losing our farm to finance company because we're in trouble paying the rest of what we owe." (Kings County)

ATTITUDES TOWARD HOUSING

The family lives in a 2 room shack; there are eleven in the family. The shack is one of many in the orchard, with one water spigot coming through the wall into a small sink. There are chemical toilets situated through the orchard. They have tacked up cardboard to keep the wind from blowing through cracks in the wall. Daylight shows through the roof. They would love to rent a house but can't because of uncertain income. (Santa Clara Valley)

"We like it here because the dirt roads don't get muddy during the rainy season and the children can always get to school. The well doesn't provide enough water. We get our water down the road (5 miles) or in Cantua. Sometimes I get so tired I'd just like to go in and die. The owner wants us to buy groceries at his store or move out. He charges too much. The owner wants us (about 30 families) to pay for drilling the well deeper. Why should we pay? We don't know how long we will stay here." (Fresno County)

"The owner only allows about 5 children in one house. So with my large family I have to rent two cabins. The roof leaks but the owner gets made when we tell him about it so we don't complain. The bathrooms are bad--no rooms, no doors; everything is open." (Indio)

"When it rains hard the roof really leaks. It leaks on our bed and all over the room. At nights when it rains we have to stand up with our child so we don't get wet and catch pneumonia. We asked them to fix it a lot of times. They work on it but they sure don't fix it. You can see light coming through the roof everywhere. The door is broke-holes all around the door -- no lock or door knob on the door. All the cold air comes in. They wouldn't ever put a window in the door. Owner said if he puts new doors or roofs on the cabins they will have to rebuild all of them and they won't do that. There is so much more sickness in the camp than in town. Children are always getting pneumonia because it is cold, damp, and dirty." (Indio)

Feels larger corporation farms pay cheapest wages. Says excuse for lower wages is that they provide housing but says that good housing goes to foremen, mechanics, etc. Ordinary work gets nothing but shacks. (Kings County)

"We asked owner for more beds but he didn't get us one yet. Owner doesn't seem concerned about our problems. He just talked back to us when we asked for beds for children. When we complain he will throw the family out of the camp. The family complained about leaks in the roof and he told us to move out if we don't like it." (Indio)

"I used to migrate a lot--seen the conditions. If I have to leave my house to sleep under a tree, I should get more than \$15 a day. A lot of families live under trees--they become community problems. Some families go to crops (like prunes) so that all the kids can work. Farmers give bonuses to those who stay so they have to stay when crops are poor and pay low. I once stayed in a place where we lived in a barn. It was divided into four rooms by boxes. The farmer told me to tell any inspectors that we were using toilet facilities--we weren't." (Tulare County)



Anecdotal Record  
(Attitudes toward Housing)

- 4 -

"Other years we could stay here to January or so but this year cotton is over and it is still November. Guess we will have to move. The grower can make things bad for the worker because he knows we will accept the housing. We need the money and work too bad to refuse. Last year we had hot water in the showers and this year we have to shower with cold. The drains don't work either. We have to carry all of our water outside. Another thing that isn't good is the houses are too close and with everything so dirty when one child gets sick everyone is sick. (Kings County)

"The house is too little -- they never paint it. If I want hot water I have to put in my own boiler. We have to spend \$10 on butane each month 'cause we have to boil everything. We have to boil water and then take it to the tub to wash clothes. We have to boil water for washing dishes. We used to be able to get hot water from the main tubs in camp but the manager has said that's for single men and we can't have it no more. If you want a bath you have to get in line for half a day--especially in the summer. There's one bath for men and one for women here (for about 30 families). Junior (12 year old) worries about our lack of money. He wants to quit school and go to work and if he don't have school he'll have to work as hard as we do." (Tulare County)

"When our family first came there was no place to live and family was living in the car. The community needs us but in many places there's no place to stay. In San Jose we had to live in a barn and in Modesto, under a walnut tree." (Kings County)

"We're staying here because it's so hard to find a place for a family. We had a good job chopping corn and picking beans and making \$165 a week but we couldn't find a place to live so we had to sleep out under the tamarisk trees. This place here isn't worth it; we built onto it ourselves and it only had a dirt floor. We laid the cement ourselves." (Indio)

"You'd be surprised the people around here who could afford it--would build a nice little home instead of these shacks--they're all they can afford on what they make." (Tulare County)

ATTITUDES TOWARD USE OF MEXICAN NATIONALS

"People right here were out of work when Schenley's had nothing but Nationals. I worked for them and saw it. I don't think that's right. People around here depend on grape pruning and now they don't get that." (Tulare County)

"In the canneries they give more privileges to the Nationals. They left us out. Is that what I fought for? (Korean War) So that the guy from Mexico could get the job? It's not fair." (Kings County)

"The Nationals take a lot of work away from us. We can use the work. I can't be a citizen earning 75¢ an hour. How can you pay tax and keep schools with 75¢ an hour? With the cheap labor in Texas we had to move out and come here. Now the same thing is happening here. People say we earn good money but we need money for a family. Nationals can live on cheap labor but a family can't." (Indio)

"On one ranch they would not let you get water -- only one at a time. They will use Nationals as threat to local labor." (Dos Palos)

"The Nationals which are brought in by United States are taking jobs that migrant families need. Why is preference given to non-American men above American families who need the work?" (Santa Clara County)

"My wife supports me because I can't work. Look at the housing the Nationals live in. They pay no tax. The money they make, our money, they take back to Mexico. What good does this do for our county, people, and children?

"Wife and I were working in carrots. We have about 80 boxes filled with carrots. Then the boss overturned about 71 or 72 of the boxes so he wouldn't have to pay us. He did this so we wouldn't come back the next day and then he could get the Nationals to do cheap labor. He did this to more families than us. I was really mad.

"One time I picked and packed tomato plants for a farmer. Mexicans were working for him, too. The Mexicans ran from the rows to the truck and back. The boss told me I would have to get my plants on the truck as fast as the Mexicans. I told him I wasn't going to run so he fired me." (Indio)

ATTITUDES TOWARD LABOR CONDITIONS

- 1) At place of present employment contractor deducts 10¢ hourly from employees earnings. Alledgedly, the company will not employ a contract worker directly until the employee has not worked for the labor contractor for a period of 90 days. (Kings County)
- 2) One contractor deducted a considerable amount of every worker's pay, because the lettuce (already in crates and on the truck) was "no good". Ranches named in connection with too many deductions. (Santa Clara County)
- 3) "Get those cotton pickers out (machines). They're taking work away from the poor people. They think so long as it's not raining there are jobs around, but they are far away now and it's mostly scratch. They charge you so much to get there and you eam \$2 - \$3. It ain't hardly worth it." (Kings County)
- 4) "Get rid of those machines. Cotton's gone and we don't know howwe're going to eat and feed our kids." (Kings County)
- 5) "The grower should not take advantage of our lack of understanding by giving us the higher mountains (?) for picking prunes or by paying a white boy who worked with us in walnuts \$1.25 an hour while we received \$1.00. If at Easter the wife goes to work elsewhere the Mr. will charge \$50 a month rent for the family." When workers are let out of canneries and other industries they draw Unemployment Compensation and yet go out to the farms and get odd jobs for less wages, so the employer won't report him. (Santa Clara County)
- 6) "They've been paying \$3.00 a hundred for cotton about 12 years. Look at the plumber and how his wages have gone up. Sure, he knows something or he could not do it. If we strike, they say, 'Go ahead, we'll get Nationals.' It doesn't do any good to strike. With machines taking over, if people don't learn a trade, they'll have to settle down in small towns and live off welfare. This work's no good, work and live from day to day, can't make anything, just a tramp's life. After so many years, we've come to the conclusion there's no future in it. People will always have to climb ladders and pick fruit and they deserve better wages. That's hard work! You've got to learn speed without bruising the fruit, how to place the ladder, how to come down with a full box of fruit. Maybe they'll get real smart and invent a machine that can pick fruit. Look at the cotton picker machine. It's not fair that they pay for a poor orchard is so much less than a good one. You work the same length of time but paid by piece work. What a mess when someone will work for less than standard pay - do a worse job too. But we've quit a job, even when we needed one, rather than put up with that. These farmers, they form associations and they tell the farmer what to pay. It's the farmer's fault, he never should have done that. It's all true, what we said .... This has been a poor year, yet they claim there's been 18-20% more fruit. We've been in a lot of poor places this year and seen good places nearby, but they already had their hands, that's made it rough. This has been a bad year for us." (Kings County)

Anecdotal Record  
(Attitudes toward Labor Conditions)

- 7 -

- 8) "I hate to live on the ranch, they tell you to hurry all the time. I'm getting old, working all the time not having rest, sometimes Saturday and Sunday. During grapes have to work from 7:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. except for one hour for lunch. Everyboyd does hard work only for \$1.00, afraid to tell the boss; he'd "fire us"." (Tulare County - by a 15 year old boy)
- 9) "Have traveled over 25 miles to find work. The community ought to stick together and the tell the grower what's what." (Dos Palos)
- 10) Family is very dissatisfied with farm labor work as a way of life. Says, - farm laborers can earn a decent wage nine months of the year if they are free to travel and know where to go. Because of their relatively higher amount of education and their understanding of the problem the family will return to San Jose and work for the Naval Air Base. (Kings County)
- 11) Man had experience about six years ago with the National Agricultural Farm Workers Union. Organizer Galarza asked the man to organize group around here. The growers boycotted anyone who went to his house and they were automatically fired. This successfully stopped activity. Filipinos stayed on and now have good pay, \$1.25 per hour plus 10¢ a box. (Tulare County)
- 12) Husband tried to do non-farm work, but "we move around so and couldn't wait for the applications, all we get to do is farm work. They want a job done extra neat for the same pay and it isn't worth it." (Kings County)



ATTITUDES TOWARD HEALTH CONDITIONS

- 1) "All babies in this camp have diarrhea. My grandchild is up in the hospital at Riverside now. I boil the water in everything and the hospital is so far we can't get up there. No screens on the door, no way to keep the flies out; it's too hot to keep the door shut. They won't take these babies with infectious diarrhea into the local hospital unless they're dying. The main problem here is health. I think this is the worst place - healthwise, morally, and physically that I've seen. No privacy in the bathroom. No shut doors on stalls. Little girls with women and little boys with grown men. It could really be improved." (Indio)
- 2) Child born this year in hospital. Had to give \$90 before wife was admitted to hospital. (treatment good) (Indio)
- 3) "All need dental care especially mother." Been sick for a week, does not know how to get in touch with the nurse." (Santa Clara County)
- 4) Husband sick several years ago, couldn't work much, went to a private doctor, took medicine awhile. "Guess he's better but he doesn't seem to work as hard any more. Maybe he should go to doctor again - but he doesn't go." (Santa Clara County)
- 5) Wife has trouble with gallstones, needs operation but can't afford it. (Kern County)
- 6) Linda in Hospital for pneumonia for two days. \$72 deposit required before they would work on her. (treated well) (Riverside County)
- 7) One family's illness report for one year:
  - Laurie had diarrhea
  - Gloria had extra bone removed from both feet
  - Diana is under examination for possible psychiatric help.
  - Jerry has liver trouble and out of school until end of December or January. (about two month from interview)
  - Whole family has hay fever
  - Many symptoms of ulcers in the husband
  - Wife had operation in hospital free during the year.
  - Mike in hospital for throat trouble.Wife's remark, "There's a lot of difference between the doctor at the clinic and a doctor you're paying---he examines you." (Kings County)

(Attitudes toward Health Conditions)

8) The school gave glasses to one of the girls last year and Mrs. "C" told the nurse they would pay for them, but they haven't been able to - "I'm ashamed." (Fresno County)

9) "When I was in the hospital I had to pay \$200.00 before they would do any surgery. I just had to lay on a stretcher and wait until they collected money from my mother. I could have died. The doctor in charge of the hospital is being brought before the court for refusing to help mother deliver baby because she had no money. The baby died." (Indio)

10) No rest rooms for ladies and complaints from employers if women spend too much time going to toilets, You can only get drinking water one at a time on ranch. At home the water is filthy or gold color. We have to haul drinking water. (Merced County)

11) "Everybody's got diarrhea now and a man over there died from it a week ago and a baby over there is up at the County Hospital because of it now. I hate to raise a fuss 'cause I can't afford to get tossed out. We got no place else to go. We boil the baby's milk and water and he's still got it - had it for over two weeks." (Indio)

12) Family health case history:

Husband - heart operation in 1958 in veterans hospital

Daughter - simultaneously in Imperial County hospital with pneumonia

Son - continual poor health since birth

Wife - childbirth in '59 - premature in incubator ....record of three children born premature and one stillborn. Mother working in prunes while carrying children. (Santa Clara County)

BOORUM & PEASE - NISIZOR

BOORUM & PEASE - NISIZOR

D. NANCE

STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS NANCE  
COACHELLA VALLEY FARMER  
REPRESENTING THE  
RIVERSIDE COUNTY FARM BUREAU  
HEARING AT EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA  
JANUARY 15, 1960

Senator Cobby and members of the committee. My name is Douglas Nance and I reside at Route 1, Box 209, Thermal, California. I was born and raised on a Coachella Valley farm and have engaged in farming in the Coachella Valley all of my adult life. I am Chairman of the Riverside County Farm Bureau's Labor Committee. We are very pleased that you members of the Senate are interested enough in our problems to hold this hearing in our area so that we could present our side of the matter to you in person.

FARM LABOR FORCE

Coachella Valley's farm labor force is divided into the following classes:

1. Operators and family workers.
2. Domestic, local year around workers who work more than 150 days per year for the same employer.
3. Domestic, local part time workers who engage in farm work when packing houses and other industrial jobs are shut down. These are used in high skilled jobs such as grape pruning, tractor driving, truck operating, etc.
4. Domestic, migrants who come to the valley during the cool winter months. These usually are unable to qualify



for any job better than stop labor.

5. Foreign, supplementary labor.

SUPPLY

Since 1941 there has never been enough of classes 2-3 and seldom enough of 4. This fall class 2 and 4 have been unusually short. Use of class 5 has been necessary to supplement classes 2-3 and 4 for many years.

NEED

We farmers must have a supply of workers available at the time and place a crop is ready for harvest if we are to produce the nation's food. Ripe vegetables and grapes must move to market as fast as they mature. Even twenty-four hours delay can result in losses.

EXPERIENCES IN UTILIZING THE MIGRANT FORCE

Domestic workers naturally prefer the cooler climates of Northern California, Oregon and Washington from April 15th to November 15th and simply quit and leave the area between these dates. Many migrants will work only a few days on a job even during the winter. The supply is absolutely unpredictable. No agency of government can furnish accurate information as to quantity which will be available on any given dates. Migrants are United States citizens and can come and go when and where the spirit moves them but we farmers seem to be expected to take full responsibility for them whenever they appear in our area. No responsibility rests on the worker in any way.

Following are case history experiences of Coachella Valley farmers in trying to utilize migrant labor to the greatest extent possible.

#### CASE HISTORIES

##### RANCHER NO. 1

During watermelon capping last season (1959) I needed forty workers. I had twenty nationals who worked through the entire season and I had over 100 domestic workers in the same period. Only two local workers set over 1000 caps (the pay for setting was \$5.00 per M). The nationals averaged 1500 caps per day. The turnover and consequent expense in writing checks for the domestics was terrific.

##### RANCHER NO. 2

I ordered five workers from the State Employment Service for work in packing grapes on my ranch (1959 season). Two worked through the season; one worked ten days, went to San Bernardino without telling us and never returned. Another worked two weeks and left; the other one left the day after he got a \$30 advance and a radio in the packing shed was missing after he left.

##### RANCHER NO. 3

I did not use nationals in harvest of 1959 cotton crop but used domestic workers. Before I could put a shredding machine in the field, after harvest, it was necessary to send in a crew to clean up the wine bottles. It would have been costly to run rubber tired vehicles in that field without

removing the bottles first.

RANCHER NO. 4

In 1956 I attempted to dust my sweet corn with local workers. This job must be done at the correct time. One family of three quit because the man of the family's feet hurt. In all I hired about twenty workers and I did not fire one person. As workers quit I replaced them with nationals. At the end of the dusting season only one elderly domestic worker was still working.

RANCHER NO. 5

In my current (1959-60) onion crop, I am harvesting the crop most of the day and packing about three hours per day. Some days I have had all local workers in the shed, other days I have had only two. I use all domestics who want work and fill in with nationals when they don't show up. The wage is \$1.00 per hour in the shed and piece work in the harvest.

RANCHER NO. 6

I used local employees to cap my 1959 watermelon crop. One morning I started the crew to work and then left for a couple of hours. I returned about 9:30 A.M. and noticed that about 75% of the crew were gathered in one close group in the middle of the field. I walked over to them and found them passing around two jugs of wine. One of them had gone into town and bought enough wine for the crew. That field was full of empty bottles when the season was over.

RANCHER NO. 7

In 1958 I had a crew of local workers picking sweet corn. One day, as they were filling a trailer with corn, there was talk of them leaving the field before finishing because it was too hot. The foreman prevailed upon them to work another hour and finish the field, by passing a 1/2 gallon jug of wine among the workers with the promise that the balance of the jug would be at the end of the row when they finished. They finished both.

DEPENDABILITY RECORDS OF 45 DOMESTIC WORKERS

AVER- AGE WAGE	NO. RE- FERRED BY	NO. FIRED	NO. QUIT	NO. WORKING ONE DAY OR LESS	OVER 1 DAY LESS THAN 5	OVER 5 LESS THAN 10	OVER 10 LESS THAN 30	OVER 30 DAYS
	S.E.S.							
	.92+	21	3	41	15	10	1	1
	Per Hour							10

One Still Working

EMPLOYMENT OF DOMESTIC WORKERS

We farmers of the Coachella Valley have employed every willing, able, domestic worker we have been able to obtain and still the need for a supplemental labor force is imperative.

Gentlemen, I thank you for the privilege of appearing before your committee today.

DOUGLAS NANCE



T. L. HARRIS

**THE UTILIZATION OF DOMESTIC FARM WORKERS  
IN THE "DESERT AREA"**

**Testimony Presented to  
The Senate Fact Finding Committee  
on  
Labor and Social Welfare**

**El Centro, California  
January 15, 1960**

**Prepared by:    Thomas L. Harris  
                  Social Insurance Analyst  
                  California Teamsters Legislative Council**

## THE UTILIZATION OF DOMESTIC FARM WORKERS IN THE "DESERT AREA"

California Teamsters have both a general and a specific interest in the utilization of domestic farm workers.

Teamsters share with other segments of Organized Labor a general interest in the utilization of domestic farm workers because whenever wages, hours, and conditions of work in agriculture fall markedly below those prevailing for other types of work, the argument is pressed that the wages, hours, and working conditions of Organized Labor should be adjusted downward to those prevailing in agriculture.

The Teamsters, therefore, view with deep concern testimony already presented to this committee which confirms conclusions that our organization has previously reached on the basis of many complaints, grievances, and observations brought to our attention by individual members and by the officials of our Teamster locals particularly of those located in agricultural areas.

To avoid repetition, we cite by page reference to the transcript of hearings held by this committee in Sacramento on November 16 and 17 some portions of testimony which we wish to emphasize and amplify.

First, according to testimony from the Department of Employment (Pages 58 and 183) the hourly wage rate for ordinary farm work in the Imperial Valley has remained stationary at 70 cents for a decade. The stability of this hourly wage rate is in marked contrast to increases in hourly rate obtained in Imperial Valley by collective bargaining during recent years. For example, according to contracts on file with the Department of Industrial Relations, construction laborers in Imperial Valley secured an increase of more than 21% in hourly rate between 1954 and 1959. Even more significant is the increase in hourly rate of two notoriously low paid categories of unskilled labor. Under a collective bargaining agreement with

Local 838, carhops in Imperial Valley in 1951 were getting \$5.20 a day (or 5 cents an hour less than the ordinary farm worker in Imperial Valley) but by 1957 carhops were getting \$8.00 a day (or 30 cents an hour more than the ordinary farm worker). Similarly, in 1951 dishwashers in Imperial Valley were getting \$6 a day (or precisely the same hourly rate as the farm worker), whereas by 1957 they were getting \$8.00 a day or an increase of 33% during a period when the ordinary farm laborer was still getting only 70 cents an hour.

The contrast between the frozen wage level for ordinary farm work in Imperial Valley and the rising wage level for unskilled but organized labor strongly suggests that the wage paid in Imperial Valley to ordinary farm labor is an "administered" wage arrived at neither by free operation of the law of supply and demand nor by the process of collective bargaining. Quite possibly the long stabilized hourly rate of 70 cents may be technically "prevailing" wage. However, the technical problem of establishing a meaningful prevailing rate in an area dominated by contract labor is clearly recognized by the Department of Employment and is being pondered by the Bureau of Employment Security (Page 225). While the Bureau of Employment Security ponders, the number of domestic farm workers declines.

Second, increasingly agricultural work, particularly seasonal work, becomes "dominated" by contract labor at the expense of domestic labor. In Imperial Valley 80% of seasonal farm work is done by contract labor according to testimony of the Department of Employment (Page 224). Figures submitted to this committee by the Department of Employment in its Supplementary Exhibits E and F give authoritative statistical evidence of a trend, long apparent in our cannery locals, towards the elimination of "domestics" from agricultural work. This elimination of domestics occurs partly because many are unwilling to accept work that is unsuitable because the wage offered is so far below their prior earnings in covered employment and



partly in some instances "domestics" though willing to work find that the jobs are filled by braceros.

Our third point which is documented by testimony already before the committee is noncompliance with various provisions of state and federal law applicable to agricultural labor. The problem of compliance is freely conceded by the responsible agencies (by the Department of Employment, Page 223, by the Bureau of Employment Security, Page 29, and by the Department of Industrial Relations, Pages 254, 260, and 267). Problems of noncompliance might be significantly reduced by clearer definition of administrative responsibility and by some increase in the investigative and enforcement staff of the responsible agencies, but we see in the history of our cannery locals a basic solution to the problem of compliance.

As Professor Fuller testifies (Page 156): "In the 1920's and early 1930's the canneries were operating in the same way as the farmers. As a matter of fact they shared the same labor supply," and we would add also shared the same unsatisfactory and inadequately regulated conditions of work and of living. In our opinion, the basic solution is to bring increasingly mechanized agriculture into line with other industries where social insurance, collective bargaining, and regulation of wages, hours, and conditions of work have long been accepted.

We come now to the specific interest of Teamsters in the utilization of domestic farm workers. Our specific interest arises from the fact that a significant number of our members either used to work in agriculture or even now work in agriculture seasonally or intermittently. The various segments of Organized Labor have no doubt a similar interest because of the alternation of their members between agricultural and other types of work, but what follows in this presentation is based on the experience of the Teamsters.

The extent to which Teamsters alternate between agricultural and other employment has not as far as we know been statistically determined. Possibly a study now being made by the Department of Employment of claimants subject to the provisions of Section 1277 of the California Unemployment Insurance Code may throw some light on the prevalence of migration back and forth from agricultural to covered employment. We know from experience that such migration is not uncommon and our impression is that as farming becomes more highly mechanized there is some significant increase in the number of our truck drivers and construction drivers who engage from time to time in agricultural work. On the other hand we have no doubt that as far as our cannery workers are concerned the percentage of such workers engaging in agriculture is steadily declining for reasons admirably summarized by Professor Fuller (Pages 137 and 156).

There is one very complex aspect of this alternation between agricultural and covered employment that has not been developed before this committee (although it has been casually mentioned), namely the exemption of agriculture from the provisions of the California Unemployment Insurance Code.

Unemployment insurance was mentioned by Professor Fuller (Page 137) as one of the fringe benefits which made seasonal work in the canneries more attractive than seasonal work in agriculture. This point deserves development. A female cannery worker with earnings at the base rate of \$1.67 an hour will probably earn at least \$868 in her high quarter and, therefore, be entitled to a weekly benefit amount of \$33 for a maximum of 13 weeks assuming that she has earnings only in the high quarter. In other words unemployment insurance benefits constitute one-third of her yearly income. In effect she is earning \$2.50 an hour. To expect such a person to work in agriculture for the substandard wages prevailing not only in

Imperial Valley but also in other agricultural areas is unrealistic especially as her unemployment insurance benefits are at the rate of 80 cents an hour. In the case of men, the contrast is even sharper. Consequently, many cannery workers, both men and women, who have had fairly recent experience in agriculture, when the differential with respect to both wages and working conditions was not so great, often regard agricultural work as unsuitable and refuse to consider referral to such work.

In such refusal they may be sustained by the Department of Employment or by the Referee on the statutory ground provided for in Section 1258.

Even so there are a substantial number of cannery workers and truck drivers and construction drivers who do work in agriculture as well as in covered employment only to find when they do file a claim for unemployment insurance that, though they have otherwise adequate base period earnings, they are ineligible under 1281(a) or 1277 because agricultural work does not count as employment for the purposes of satisfying the 75% or lag quarter rules.

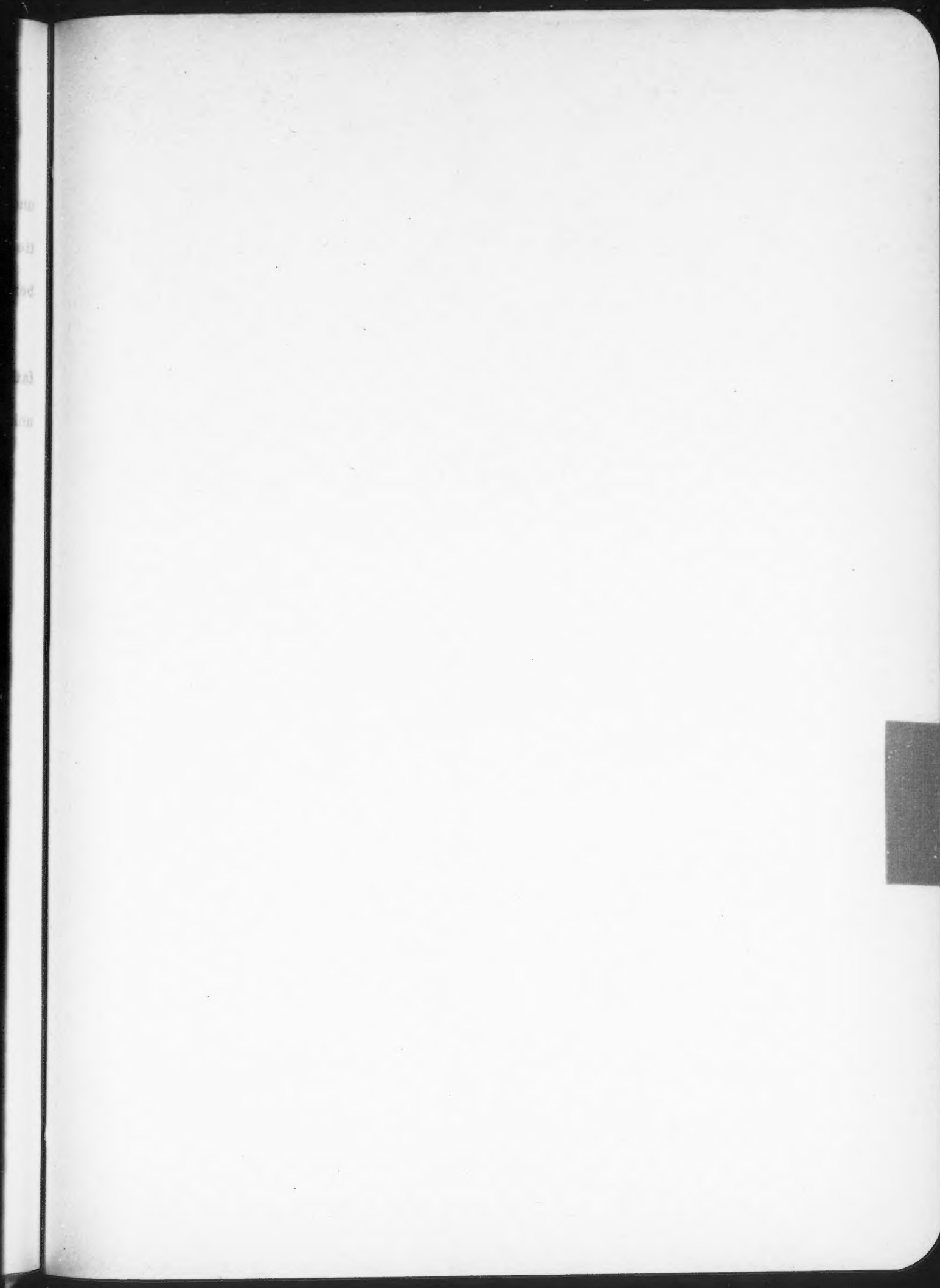
In many instances our members would be well advised (and often are so advised) to refuse a top paying job on a farm and accept a much lower hourly rate for a few weeks in some kind of covered employment so that he can escape ineligibility under the 75% or lag quarter rules. These technicalities are not a major reason for the drift of domestic labor from farm work but they emphasize, in the minds of those disqualified because of them, the inherent absurdity of excluding agriculture where it employs the same types of skill and requires the same kind of effort as other work from the benefits enjoyed by those in covered employment.

One final point must be made in this connection. To the extent to which unemployed workers with wages in covered employment once again find opportunities to work in agriculture, to that extent the Unemployment Insurance Fund is benefitted.

We regret the lack of statistical evidence on such matters but in our judgment failure to make full utilization of domestic workers in agriculture is creating an unhealthy schism between agriculture and the rest of our economy.

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Senator Cobey and members of the Committee:

My name is William J. Thornburg, my occupation is that of Co-manager, with my brother, of Thor Packing Co., Inc., a family held farming operation at Holtville, California. Our firm farms approximately 2,000 acres of diversified crops including lettuce, carrots, cabbage, sugar beets, cotton, alfalfa, and barley.

One of the subjects under consideration by this committee at today's hearing is that of domestic farm workers in the desert area. Our firm has hired domestic laborers in various phases of farm work over the years; it is from this experience that I speak.

Any analysis of the Domestic work force should include the following statistics:

According to a recent survey by our Farmer's Association the total approximate number of Domestics employed in this area is 5700. The percentage of the total work force in this area which consists of domestics is 35%.

I would like to comment on the skills and the dependability of the Domestic labor force. For this purpose I have divided this force into three categories. The first of these is that segment of Domestic Labor we know as Locals. These people have a genuine desire for farm work, and are mostly farm laborers. They are dignified, conscientious, and willing. The dependability of this segment of the labor force is limited to its availability. Another segment of the Domestic Labor Force we know as migrants. These people are generally dependable individually, but they are undependable as a work force as a whole. These people have a tendency to move from one employer to another more than is necessary. Things so simple as the difference between the conditions of two farmers' crops will cause them to pick up and leave one farmer and go to another. Climate governs their moves also. These people usually leave here in the Spring, in April or May, in order to arrive on hand for another harvest in the North. This creates a need for additional supplemental labor to finish harvesting late spring crops such as garlic, carrots, and onions. Conversely, these people arrive late in the fall on account of the fact they do not wish to take the chance of the sporadic work connected with the beginning of any harvesting season.

The third phase of the Domestic Labor Force about which I would like to speak is the Drifters. These are people who lack the motivation to work. They are physically inept and usually incapable even of doing simple farm tasks. They presume upon their citizenship as their only claim to demand jobs in this area. No matter how many foreign workers are needed, it is my feeling that Agricultural interests should not be saddled with the cast-offs of industry, the unemployables of the United States who, although they lack the desire and ability to work, have gravitated here demanding jobs in the hope that they will get something for nothing.

Here are some figures that throw a light on this statement: Of 8767 Domestic Workers referred to our Farmers' Association for placement in the various fields during the past year, approximately 15% did not even show up for work, one-half of this number were referred at least twice. Of the total referred during the most recent 4 month period, the average length of time spent on the job by 841 men referred was 8½ days. Public law 78 also has some information on this point. Section 503 of title 5 states as follows and I quote: "No workers recruited under this title shall be available for employment in any area, unless the Secretary of Labor has determined and certified that (1) sufficient Domestic Workers who are able, willing, and qualified are not available at the time and place needed to perform the work for which workers are to be employed."

Farmers of this area make every effort to recruit Domestic Workers. Work needs are filed with the local Department of Employment of the State of California which makes diligent efforts to fill our needs. Buses hired by farmers go to Calexico and Brawley daily to transport all Domestic Laborers who wish to work to the fields. Buses are operated by our local Farmers' Association to transport Domestic Workers referred to the Association by the Department of Employment to the fields where they will work.

Efforts are made to maximize the utilization of Domestics. As you know, the provisions of Public Law 78 require that farmers provide certain perquisites for Mexican Nationals employed in this country. These perquisites answer a two-fold purpose. They provide housing and



transportation for single men long distances from home so that social problems will not arise in this country; the requirement for these perquisites was expressly put into the law by Congress at the request of labor so as to make the cost of hiring the Mexican National so high as to virtually guarantee full employment for all qualified Domestic labor.

Other efforts to maximize the utilization of Domestic Labor are carried on by Compliance Officers of the Department of Employment and the Federal Government. Our Association also helps in this regard by informing all members of their duties and obligations in seeing that Domestic Labor is used to the fullest extent possible.

The use of youths as farm workers is regulated by law. Farmers co-operate with those young people wishing to work on Saturdays and holidays by helping them to obtain work permits. Those beyond the age when a work permit is required are accorded the same privileges and opportunities as all other Domestic Labor. During the seasonal demand for heavy equipment operators in the summertime, many College youths home from school find jobs to help them finance their educations.

The most serious aspect of Domestic Farm Labor as it pertains to this area is its extreme scarcity. This scarcity is so acute that this has become a so-called Dominated Area, that is, Mexican Nationals constitute a greater percentage of the farm labor force than do Domestic Laborers. I should like to discuss the background of this Domestic Labor Shortage.

From the time of Abraham to the Industrial Revolution, mankind has been preoccupied primarily with feeding and clothing himself. These pursuits lead to the maintenance of an agrarian society where all segments of society were familiar with the soil and all knew the problems of wresting a living from the ground. In our own country the vast majority of our early citizens were engaged in Agricultural activities. With the coming of the Industrial Revolution during the late 19th century great urban centers developed. People who had begun leaving the farm years before now began leaving in ever increasing numbers. People are still leaving the farm. Fewer and fewer of our citizens provide the farm products for the balance of the Nation. Three years



ago the Department of Commerce announced that even with the increase in population caused by our exploding birth rate, there were less people working to produce agricultural products than shown in the census of 1950. Just last week on the Editorial Page of Life Magazine, new statistics were revealed showing that at the present time 5% or less of our population is engaged in producing the Agricultural Products for the other 95%.

Let us explore some of the reasons why people are still leaving the farm. These reasons are the same as those which are responsible for the shortage of Domestic Farm Labor. One of the reasons, is that long hours are necessary in farming. When a crop is ready, especially a perishable crop, it must be harvested. When weather allows any operation incidental to producing a successful crop, the work must be done. Another of these reasons is the poor working conditions peculiar to farming. Farm work in general must be performed outside, subject to the elements. Seasonal employment for workers and violent swings of income for employers are other disadvantages. High investments per acre to bring a crop to maturity with the resulting high risk of damage by the elements and the continual threat of unstable commodity prices cause people to seek the security of a more dependable income. Another reason for the constant attrition of the farm labor force is the lack of recreational and community services provided in rural areas as compared to those provided in the cities.

Because our educational system and our expanding economy have created a standard of living in which the average citizen has been led to believe that he need not perform stoop labor to support himself and his family, he is neither physically nor psychologically conditioned to perform farm work. I'm not trying to detract from the dignity of farm work; I'm merely trying to point out that other forms of employment have become more desirable from the worker's point of view. Even if Agriculture could somehow pay the same wages as industry, this flight of labor would still continue on account of the shorter hours of effort, increased time for leisure, improved working conditions, and improved job security available in industry.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my firm belief in the fact that the farmers of this area stand ready to employ all willing and able Domestic Workers available to them for farm work.

Respectfully submitted,

William J. Thornburg



Statement of Keith Mets - President of Imperial Valley  
Farmers Association to The Senate Fact Finding  
Committee on Labor and Welfare, El Centro,  
California, January 15, 1960.

Senator Cobey and members of the Committee:

I am Keith Mets, a farmer, from Holtville, California. I raise vegetables, hay and grain and raise and fatten beef cattle. I am president of the Imperial Valley Farmers' Association, a non-profit corporation with approximately 1,000 members who are farmers in Imperial Valley. The Association recruits Mexican contract workers or braceros for its members as authorized under Public Law 78.

Let me review for a few minutes the beginning of the Mexican labor program. As you know, in the early years of World War II great numbers of Mexican wet back workers came to this country to work in all forms of agricultural and industrial jobs. In 1951 Public Law 78 was enacted and today the illegal Mexican worker is non-existent.

As presented in other testimony, Imperial Valley has approximately 500,000 acres of irrigated land planted to a greater variety of vegetable and field crops than almost any other area in the United States.

We are different from most areas as we are planting and harvesting some vegetable or field crop every month of the year. This means that we need field workers to irrigate, thin, weed and harvest our crops every month of the year.

Our vegetables are harvested in the Winter and Spring and compete with the same crops from Arizona and Texas. Our basic wage for unskilled farm workers is 75¢ per hour in Imperial, San Diego and Riverside Counties. This is 5 to 10 cents higher than areas in Arizona and 25¢ higher than the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas that produces the same vegetables and melons at the same time we do here in Imperial Valley; namely, lettuce, carrots, cabbage, tomatoes and melons. And also great quantities of tomatoes and melons come from Mexico at this same time. Arizona and Texas also produce cotton, hay, grain and fatten cattle just as we do here in Imperial Valley.

If farmers of Imperial Valley are to continue to produce these crops we must have a supply of labor that is willing and able to do the work required to plant, cultivate and harvest these crops. There



are not enough American workers available who are willing and able to do this unskilled field work.

Let me remind you that braceros are only used on jobs where we do not have enough domestic workers as certified to by the California Department of Employment and this is only for unskilled farm work such as irrigating, weeding, thinning and harvesting of crops in the fields. Braceros are not allowed to drive tractors, work in feed lots, drive trucks or herd sheep, except at such times in the summer when domestic labor is not available because of hot weather.

The minimum number of braceros used by the Imperial Valley Farmers' Association in 1959 was during July and was approximately 4,500. The maximum number was approximately 10,500 in November.

Imperial Valley has been criticized for having a work force of braceros of 4,500 men all year. Let me point out to you that our harvest season for vegetables and melons is for December to July during which time we have about 10,500 in December and decrease to about 4,500 in July when melon harvest is over.

During July, August and September we still have to irrigate our land and prepare it for planting which starts in September. This requires a large number of men and there are no domestic workers available for this work during the hot months when our average temperatures are from 110 to 120 degrees.

During this time we have great difficulty getting tractor drivers, hay haulers, feed lot workers and at times braceros have been certified for these jobs in order to keep our farms operating.

As I mentioned before, we have a 12 month farming operation. We are harvesting and planting some crop every month of the year. This requires adequate labor every month of the year. The California Department of Employment certifies that domestic labor is not available and permits us to use braceros. As you know, domestic workers have the same opportunities that the braceros have.

Let me point out to you that San Diego industries have many large sign boards on all our highways inviting all workers to beautiful, cool San Diego, to pleasant jobs at good pay while you learn. Also, San Diego and Los Angeles newspapers have page after page of the same

inviting ads recruiting workers. We cannot get the workers we need with such competition so near at hand.

Also, let me point out that with this competition the farmers that are members of the Imperial Valley Farmers' Association employed <sup>approx.</sup> 5,700 domestic workers and 10,500 bracero workers, according to a recent survey made by the Association.

Also, I want to point out to the Committee that the city of Mexicali is estimated to have a population of 150,000 to 200,000 people. The United States Immigration Service estimates there are 1,200 American citizens living there and working in Imperial Valley and also 1,000 Mexicans with immigration papers working as domestics in Imperial Valley.

Imperial Valley Farmers' Association has a truck at the border every morning to see that every worker has an opportunity to work, and also every domestic worker who applies to the California Employment Service is given the same opportunity for employment that the braceros have.

On behalf of Imperial Valley Farmers' Association I submit to your Committee that Public Law 78 is very essential to our agriculture in Imperial County and we need braceros all year long. The farmers of Imperial Valley cannot continue to produce food and fiber without this essential supplemental supply of labor.

Respectfully submitted,

Keith Mets, President

Imperial Valley Farmers' Association

BOOKS & PLEASE TALK TO US

R. GIBBONS &  
C. THOMAS

**THE BRACERO PROBLEM IN THE DESERT AREA**

**Testimony Presented to  
The Senate Fact Finding Committee  
on  
Labor and Social Welfare**

**El Centro, California  
January 15, 1960**

**Prepared by: Imperial County Labor  
Coordinating Committee**



## THE BRACERO PROBLEM IN THE DESERT AREA

We have a special interest in the problem of the "utilization of domestic workers in the desert areas" in that El Centro is the receiving center for braceros for the entire State of California. From this center all Mexican Nationals are distributed throughout the state.

It appears that domestic workers have become a mere supplement to the labor force in California agriculture which is now dominated by foreign labor.

For example, according to Department of Employment figures in 1953, 45.8% of all seasonal labor in Imperial County was foreign labor. In 1955---65.3%, 1957---78.2%, and 1959---80.3% of all seasonal workers were foreign labor. In San Diego during 1953---59.9%, 1955---92.7%, and in 1959---97.2% of all seasonal labor was foreign labor.

By these figures one can see that farm employers have continually increased the employment of braceros. Thus the bracero has come to dominate many major California crops. Percentage-wise foreign labor dominates in the following crops: Tomatoes by 73%, asparagus 56%, lettuce and sugar beet 60%, and lemons 80%. Incidentally, tomatoes, lettuce, and beets are among the major crops of Imperial Valley.

In the beets which is a bracero dominated crop the average hourly wage rate, according to Department of Employment figures, was not over 70¢ in 1951 and the 70¢ hourly wage rate for beets has remained for nine years.

( We were informed a few weeks ago that some farm employers are now paying a 75¢ average hourly wage.)

The foreign labor program not only has become a serious threat to the domestic agriculture worker throughout California, but also the bracero, himself, has

become a victim of abuse and mistreatment. Therefore, in the interest of time and to avoid duplication I will proceed to the problems of the Mexican Nationals.

Numerous allegations have been brought to our attention. Many of them seem to us to be factual, but it is rather difficult to document specific instances where braceros have been under paid, exploited, and ill fed.

The problem raised by the bracero program is twofold. Problem one, he creates an economic threat to our society and problem two, at the same time we cannot overlook that since he is here is is mistreated.

Problem One: In our judgment the farm associations have created a need for and have since become dependent upon the bracero. Not mainly for the advertized reason of shortage of domestic workers, but for the purpose of a controlled labor market, low wages, and the feasibility of exploitation.

Problem Two: Exploitation of Mexican Nationals most commonly occurs from failing to give proper medical treatment or overcharging in daily food cost.

Medical Treatment: The major responsibility of medical care lies with the insurance company and the contracted physician, but in most areas it is handled in close alliance with the farm association.

It is not difficult for the insurance company, unethical physician, or farm association or a collaboration thereof to withhold all or part of the medical benefits from a bracero. It should be borne in mind that employers have an interest in not reporting all injuries because the fewer injuries reported the better his experience rating and thus a lower premium.

The tendency of a minority of employers to ignore or minimize on-the-job injuries is not confined to agriculture, but where labor is organized such grievances are as a rule promptly brought to the attention of the business agent.

In the case of the unorganized bracero he often fails to obtain his benefits because of ignorance of his rights and/or inability to speak English. As a rule he must be unusually intelligent, aggressive, or fortunate to secure his rights.

Let me cite a specific case where the Mexican National eventually did receive his benefits and treatment that he was entitled to although originally his complaint was completely ignored and he was sent to Mexico without the proper medical treatment.

Permit me to read the translation of his brief sworn statement.

(Statement of Alfonso P. Cardenas)

May I add that since his testimony was given, a member of our committee assisted in bringing his case before the persons concerned. Mr. Cardenas received his temporary benefits immediately after contacts were made, but as far as we know, no disposition has been made relative to permanent disability benefits.

We cite this case because it is our understanding that this bracero is one of many who are sent back to Mexico without proper medical care. The major difference in this case is that he was aware of his rights and continuously demanded medical attention.

Many of the braceros are far less fortunate and either receive no treatment or else very inadequate treatment by nurses rather than by qualified medical personnel.

Food: We understand (from testimony given to this committee on November 16-17, testimony proceedings, Page 237) that the Bureau of Employment Security is investigating the cost of food to determine what items are properly chargeable. Such an investigation would tend to confirm or to disprove frequently heard complaints that braceros are being overcharged. Presumably, the farm associations which feed braceros keep accounts showing the amount deducted, representing revenue and the itemized cost.

R. W. PETHERBRIDGE



CALIFORNIA STATE SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE  
ON LABOR AND WELFARE

Statement of RICHARD W. PETHERBRIDGE

El Centro, California  
January 4, 1960

I am an Attorney at Law, engaged in general practice, with offices at 117 North Fifth Street, El Centro, California. I have been a resident of Imperial County since September 15, 1952, and have maintained offices at the same address since that date. My comments here are made on behalf of myself alone.

The news release issued by this committee on December 21, 1959 gives a 'bird's eye view' of the agricultural labor situation in the Imperial Valley at this time. The release refers to a marked increase in the use of Braceros in agricultural labor since 1955. It would be my observation that the increase in the use of Braceros and the decrease in the use of domestic labor in agriculture concurred with, and perhaps was the result of, both technological changes in packing and a tightening of border regulations so that fewer persons found it possible to enter the United States illegally and engage in agricultural work here.

I think it is extremely difficult to say, with any certainty, whether or not Braceros are needed to supplement domestic labor in Imperial Valley. I think it is quite clear that domestic workers are not coming to the Imperial Valley in anything like the numbers which came here before 1954 or 1955. Whether domestics refused to come here, thus creating a need for Braceros, or Braceros came in large numbers and reduced the opportunity for domestics —the

answer is as illusive as "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?" In dealing with the labor situation here, the "going wage" may be the key. Perhaps, if one dollar per hour were paid for all labor performed, there would be more than enough domestic workers to get the job done.

I would venture to suggest that it is the rising standard of living in this area which makes it impossible to get domestic workers to do agricultural labor at a rate which has not significantly increased during at least the last 7 years. In other fields, wages have increased during this period. Certainly prices have continued to rise. If a large group of domestic workers were available to work for 70¢ an hour (gross but \$42.00 for a 60 hour week, for example), this would mean that a large portion of our population was incapable of maintaining the standard of living in which we as Americans take so much pride.

The increase in the use of Braceros since 1954 has resulted in less money being spent in local places of business. I can verify this by my own books which show an increase in activities from my arrival here in 1952 until the winter of 1954-55, then a definite slacking off before business began to improve again. Furthermore, during 1955 and 1956, there were a number of local businesses, catering primarily to domestic transient trade, which were forced to close their doors. Pep Boys and Western Auto both had places of business on Main Street in El Centro when I arrived in 1952; both left town during the period referred to. Another auto parts place, similar in character, which opened during that period has since gone out of business.

I am personally acquainted with a number of families who previously made a living out of seasonal agricultural work here

in Imperial Valley, who have moved farther north. Such organizations as the Community Service Organization are in constant contact with numbers of domestic workers who have found opportunities for work diminishing as the use of Braceros has increased.

I think it is noteworthy that the total population of Imperial County by census has not increased substantially within the last decade. During this same period the population of the state has increased greatly. Unquestionably the availability of employment opportunities in Imperial Valley for domestic workers has not kept pace with the rest of the state.





STATEMENT OF GABRIEL M. GIANNINI, A FARMER, TO THE  
SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND WELFARE  
OF THE CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE MADE BY JAMES J.  
O'BRIEN, JR. AT EL CENTRO, CALIFORNIA, JANUARY 15,  
1960.

The witness, as an owner and operator of ranches in Coachella Valley, wishes to set forth his views as to the usefulness of the Mexican National program to Coachella Valley agriculture.

Basically, from an economic standpoint, I would like to use farm help comprising either U. S. Citizens or permanent residents of this country. The reasons for this preference are the following:

- (1) Long range planning based on the availability of labor from abroad is less sound than if such planning were dependant upon the use of U. S. citizens or U. S. residents.
- (2) U. S. citizens or residents are not restricted from operating machinery and carrying out certain labor practices such as those which involve the handling of certain chemicals.
- (3) It is undesirable to use foreign contract labor because of loss of ones rights when he uses that labor, and red tape involved.
- (4) No language barrier exists with U. S. citizens and residents.

In spite of the foregoing basic economic preferences, I am convinced that without the availability of Mexican Nationals the agriculture in Coachella Valley would find itself in an unprecedented and most severe crises. The reasons for the foregoing statement are as follows:

(a) The Coachella Valley is an exceedingly hot area in the summer time. It is in fact the area where 95% of the dates are grown commercially in the United States. This means that even if substitutes to the Mexican National labor program may be found for other areas, the same solution may not be directly applicable to the Coachella Valley.

(b) The critical portion of the agricultural work in the Coachella Valley takes place during the summer time. During the same period are concentrated the most critical portions of such work.

(c) During the summer period the so-called LOCAL LABOR JUST DOES NOT EXIST in Coachella Valley. The number of applicants available to the California State Department of Employment Office is negligible and some days during the month of August, for example, practically non-existent. The reason for this is that no matter how comfortable quarters one may make available to transient workers, they just don't come to Coachella Valley in the summer time. There are, to be true, a few people available during the winter but they steadily disappear in the spring only to reappear in the late fall after the weather has cooled.

There is no way known to me to bring farm hands to Coachella Valley at this time other than braceros, and without the availability of Mexican Nationals, I feel that the majority of farms, other than one-man farms, would have to shut down.

To corroborate the foregoing statement I will give a specific example of an occurrence that has taken place on my ranch last spring. I was growing a crop of 80 acres of corn. The weather became warm and corn dusters were not available at the State Employment Office, as a result I had to resort to mechanical dusting which, in my case, proved not to be efficient. Approximately 35% of the crop had corn ear worm and was not marketable. In addition, at picking time, neither local nor bracero pickers were available in sufficient numbers. The result was that my loss was in excess of \$8,000.00 on this crop.

It should be remembered that large scale Coachella farming dates back only to the opening of the All American Canal. Since that date, braceros have been available to the area. In Coachella Valley, so-called unemployed farmers have proven to be, in a great majority of cases, drifters who show up only in the middle of the winter when it is cold or wet elsewhere. Even during that season they cannot be employed with any reliability and the cases of one-day employment have been numerous. If Mexican Nationals were not available in Coachella Valley for farming activities, the area has the following alternatives:

One is to let the area go back to desert. This is obviously not a constructive solution.

The second alternative is thru the use of farm labor which might have crossed the border illegally. This would certainly not constitute a logical solution but from a realistic standpoint it should not be ignored in a period of stress and which in turn would create considerable evil in the area.

A third alternative is for farm capital to fly south of the border. This again is not an economically constructive alternative.

Finally, the fourth alternative would be to increase the mechanization of farms in general.

This would create more jobs in factories but certainly would not employ any U. S. citizens or residents even if they were there and available.

While I'm not acquainted with farming conditions elsewhere in California and I cannot therefore express any opinion on whether braceros may be successfully replaced by local labor in central and northern California areas, I will state without hesitancy that the unavailability of Mexican National labor in Coachella Valley would most severely reduce the economic usefulness of farming in this area.

(Signed)

GABRIEL M. GIANNINI



R. GILBERT

STATEMENT FOR THE STATE SENATE FACT FINDING COMMITTEE  
ON LABOR AND WELFARE  
SCHEDULED MARCH 15, 1960

I AM RALPH GILBERT, FARMER AND STATE DELEGATE FOR IMPERIAL COUNTY FARM BUREAU, A VOLUNTARY FARM ORGANIZATION WITH A MEMBERSHIP OF 1460 FAMILIES IN IMPERIAL VALLEY. I GROW SUGAR BEETS, ALFALFA, BARLEY AND COTTON. I WOULD LIKE TO TALK PRINCIPALLY ON MECHANIZATION IN AGRICULTURE AND SUMMER EMPLOYMENT IN THE IMPERIAL VALLEY.

A SHORTAGE OF DOMESTIC LABOR AND LACK OF DESIRE ON THE PART OF MANY OF OUR UNEMPLOYED TO DO AGRICULTURAL WORK HAS FORCED FARMERS TO MECHANIZE. ANOTHER CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN IMPERIAL VALLEY IS OUR HOT SUMMER WEATHER.

THIS LAST FALL, MOST OF THE COTTON IN IMPERIAL VALLEY WAS PICKED BY MACHINE BECAUSE THERE WASN'T ENOUGH DOMESTIC LABOR AVAILABLE TO DO THE JOB. WHEN THIS LABOR WAS SUPPLEMENTED BY BRACEROS, WE WERE REQUIRED TO PAY THEM A MINIMUM WAGE EVEN IF THEY SAT ON THEIR SACKS ALL DAY.

DOMESTIC LABORERS IN THIS COUNTRY DO NOT WANT TO DO THE STOOP LABOR THAT IS REQUIRED IN THINNING AND HOEING SUGAR BEETS AND VEGETABLES. IT IS MUCH MORE DESIRABLE TO THIN SUGAR BEETS AND VEGETABLES BY HAND THAN BY MACHINE AS LONG AS LABOR IS AVAILABLE AT A PRICE THE GROWERS CAN AFFORD TO PAY. YET THESE JOBS REQUIRE A GREAT NUMBER OF WORKERS AT A GIVEN TIME AS IT MUST BE DONE WHEN THE CROP IS READY AND GROUND CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT. OUR VARIABLE SOIL TYPES, ALKALINE SOIL CONDITION; THE FACT THAT OUR BEETS MUST ALL BE SUB-IRRIGATED AND OUR EXTREME WEED CONDITIONS MAKE MECHANICAL THINNING VERY DIFFICULT. THINNING AND HOEING 40,000 TO 45,000 ACRES OF SUGAR BEETS REQUIRES APPROXIMATELY 200,000 MAN DAYS OVER A PERIOD OF A FEW MONTHS. IN

IMPERIAL VALLEY WE ALSO HAVE THE ADDED EXPENSE OF PAYING A PART OF THE FREIGHT COSTS TO SEND THE BEETS TO FACTORIES OUTSIDE OF IMPERIAL VALLEY OR OF TRANSPORTING THE SUGAR TO MARKET. HARVESTING OF SUGAR BEETS IS NOW ALL MECHANIZED IN IMPERIAL VALLEY. THIS WORK IS DONE MOSTLY IN MAY, JUNE AND JULY AND IT WOULD BE ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO GET SUFFICIENT HELP FOR HAND HARVESTING OF SUGAR BEETS DURING THESE HOT MONTHS.

WHILE I, PERSONALLY, ENJOY THE SUMMERS IN IMPERIAL VALLEY, MANY OBJECT TO OUR HOT WEATHER AND MANY OF OUR DOMESTIC LABORERS GO NORTH WHEN THE SUMMER HEAT BEGINS. YET MUCH OF OUR LAND PREPARATION, IRRIGATION, HARVESTING AND THE MAKING OF HAY MUST BE DONE DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS AND THIS WORK MUST BE DONE ON SCHEDULE. FOR EXAMPLE---- IF HAY ISN'T CUT, RAKED, BALED AND HAULED OUT OF THE FIELD AT THE PROPER TIME, THE QUALITY OF THE CROP IS GREATLY REDUCED, NOT TO MENTION THE LOSS TO THE NEXT CROP OF HAY. THE RELIABILITY OF THE WORKERS IN HAY HARVESTING OPERATIONS IS VERY IMPORTANT.

IN THE PRODUCTION OF ALFALFA HAY THERE HAS BEEN A SWING TOWARD COMPLETE MECHANIZATION. HAY MUST BE BALED WHEN THERE IS ENOUGH MOISTURE TO RETAIN THE LEAVES, IF A HIGH QUALITY IS TO BE MAINTAINED. IN IMPERIAL VALLEY THAT MEANS THAT THE OPERATION MUST BEGIN WHEN THERE IS SUFFICIENT DEW TO MOISTEN THE HAY - SOMETIMES AT 10:00 P.M., SOMETIMES AROUND MIDNIGHT AND OTHER TIMES NOT UNTIL 3:00 OR 4:00 O'CLOCK IN THE MORNING. THE HAY MAY BE RIGHT TO BALE FOR ONLY 2 OR 3 HOURS OR IT MAY BE RIGHT FOR 10 HOURS. A FEW YEARS AGO A HAY BALER REQUIRED 4 MEN. IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO MAINTAIN A CREW OF 4 MEN WHEN SUCH UNCERTAINTY AS TO WORKING HOURS EXISTS, SO BALING MACHINES WERE INVENTED WHICH REQUIRE THE USE OF ONLY ONE MAN.

THE CHANGE TOWARD MECHANIZATION IN AGRICULTURE HAS CAUSED A SHIFT IN OUR ECONOMY. SOME OF THE MANPOWER WHICH FORMERLY WAS USED

IN FARMING OPERATIONS AS SUCH, IS NOW EMPLOYED IN MANUFACTURING AND SERVICING THE MACHINERY THAT DOES THE ACTUAL JOB. THE CHANGE TO MECHANIZATION IS ONE REASON FOR THE SUCCESS OF AGRICULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES.

WHEN SUMMER ARRIVES IN IMPERIAL VALLEY THE MAJORITY OF THE MOBILE DOMESTIC LABOR FORCE MOVES ELSEWHERE. HOWEVER IRRIGATION IN IMPERIAL VALLEY IS A YEAR-AROUND OPERATION. IN FACT, IRRIGATIONS MUST BE MORE FREQUENT IN THE SUMMER MONTHS THAN AT OTHER TIMES OF THE YEAR. WATER MUST BE ATTENDED ON A 24 HOUR BASIS. IF THE IRRIGATOR LEAVES THE FIELD AND FAILS TO RETURN WHEN THE WATER SHOULD BE CHANGED, THE WATER CONTINUES TO RUN AND SERIOUS DAMAGE RESULTS. THIS IS A JOB WHICH, THOUGH NOT REQUIRING A GREAT DEAL OF SKILL, DOES REQUIRE RELIABLE WORKERS.

APPROXIMATELY ONE HALF OF THE FARM LAND IN IMPERIAL VALLEY IS USED IN THE PRODUCTION OF GRAIN AND ALFALFA. BOTH OF THESE CROPS ARE IN DIRECT COMPETITION WITH OTHER BORDER STATES AND MEXICO WHERE LABOR AND OTHER COSTS OF PRODUCTION ARE LOWER THAN IN CALIFORNIA.

LAST SUMMER IT WAS NOT ONLY DIFFICULT TO HIRE IRRIGATORS AND STOOP LABOR, BUT ALSO TO GET DOMESTIC LABOR TO DRIVE TRACTORS AND DO SEMI-SKILLED WORK. WITH OUR HOT SUMMERS AND OUR NEED FOR STOOP LABOR, IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO OPERATE OUR IMPERIAL VALLEY FARMS ON A YEAR-AROUND BASIS AS WE MUST DO WITH OUR DIVERSIFIED TYPE OF FARMING, WITHOUT SUPPLEMENTING OUR DOMESTIC LABOR FORCE WITH BRACEROS. THIS IS NO NEW DEVELOPMENT. WE HAVE ALWAYS USED SUPPLEMENTAL LABOR IN IMPERIAL VALLEY. BEFORE THE BRACERO PROGRAM BEGAN, THE WETBACK WAS USED AND THERE WAS A LARGE NUMBER OF PHILIPINO LABORERS IN IMPERIAL VALLEY. THESE ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE. MUCH OF OUR DOMESTIC LABOR OF MEXICAN DESCENT HAS MOVED INTO INDUSTRY. THIS LEAVES A VERY UNSATISFACTORY DOMESTIC LABOR FORCE FOR AGRICULTURE.



IT IS HARDLY FAIR TO EXPECT AGRICULTURE TO ABSORB INTO THEIR LABOR FORCE ALL THE MISFITS AND THE CAST OFF LABOR FROM INDUSTRY AND BUSINESS. WE REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF HAVING EVERYONE GAINFULLY EMPLOYED, BUT DON'T BELIEVE THE TOTAL BURDEN SHOULD FALL ON AGRICULTURE.

THE FARMER IS IN A DIFFERENT POSITION THAN OTHER BUSINESS MEN. HE CANNOT LIMIT HIS HARVESTING OPERATIONS BE CAUSE OF LABOR SHORTAGES AND EXPECT TO SURVIVE. A CROP THAT IS READY TO HARVEST NOT ONLY REPRESENTS A YEARS WORK BUT THE SAVINGS OF SEVERAL PREVIOUS YEARS. FARMERS CAN NOT SUSPEND THEIR OPERATIONS FOR A FEW MONTHS BECAUSE OF LABOR SHORTAGES OR DISPUTES AND START UP AGAIN WHERE THEY LEFT OFF. CROPS MUST BE PLANTED AND CARED FOR IN THE PROPER SEASON OR THERE WILL BE NO HARVEST. FOR THIS REASON FARMERS OPPOSE ORGANIZED LABOR IN AGRICULTURE. IF WE ARE GOING TO SUPPLY THE ABUNDANCE OF FOOD AND FIBER THAT IS NEEDED FOR A HEALTHY AND PROSPEROUS AMERICA, FARMERS MUST MAINTAIN CONTROL OF AGRICULTURE.

I HAVE MANY TIMES BEEN ASKED WHY I AM IN FAVOR OF ORGANIZING FARMERS THROUGH FARM BUREAU AND OPPOSE ORGANIZED LABOR IN AGRICULTURE. FARMERS HAVE WORKED THROUGH FARM BUREAU, A VOLUNTARY FARM ORGANIZATION, TOWARD BETTER FARM ECONOMY BY GETTING BETTER TYPES AND SUPPLIES OF FERTILIZER, BETTER VARIETIES OF CROPS, NEW CROPS, BETTER TRANSPORTATION, EQUALIZATION OF TAXES AND THE KIND OF LEGISLATION THAT WOULD BE BENEFICIAL AND NOT DETRIMENTAL TO AGRICULTURE.

FARMERS HAVE ALWAYS GONE ALL OUT TO MEET ESTABLISHED PRODUCTION GOALS, EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD NO ASSURANCE THAT THEY WOULD GET BACK THEIR COST OF PRODUCTION. NEVER HAVE FARMERS OR FARM BUREAU SAID THAT IF THEY COULDN'T GET CERTAIN PRICES FOR THEIR CROPS THEY WOULD NOT PLANT. IF THE CONTROL OF AGRICULTURE WERE TURNED OVER TO THE LEADERS OF

ORGANIZED LABOR, WHEN OUR PERISHABLE CROPS WERE READY TO HARVEST OR READY TO BE PLANTED, WE WOULD BE TOLD IN EFFECT THAT IF WE DIDN'T MEET THEIR WAGE DEMANDS AND OTHER CONDITIONS WHICH IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO MEET UNDER THE PRESENT PRICE STRUCTURE, OUR CROPS WOULD NOT BE PLANTED OR WOULD ROT IN THE FIELD. NO AMOUNT OF GOVERNMENT LEGISLATION WILL PRODUCE A CROP UNLESS CROPS ARE PLANTED IN THE PROPER SEASON. AMERICAN FARMERS HAVE DONE A GOOD JOB OF PRODUCING AN ABUNDANCE OF FOOD AND FIBER, AT TIMES UNDER ADVERSE CONDITIONS, TO MAKE THIS THE BEST-FED NATION ON EARTH. WE WOULD BE DOING, NOT ONLY THE FARMERS, BUT ALL THE PEOPLE OF THIS NATION, A GREAT DISSERVICE IF WE TOOK THE CONTROL OF THE NATIONS BREAD BASKET OUT OF THE HANDS OF THE FARMERS AND TURNED IT OVER TO THE LEADERS OF ORGANIZED LABOR.

I WANT TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO THANK THIS COMMITTEE FOR COMING TO IMPERIAL VALLEY TO TALK TO THE FARMERS ABOUT PROBLEMS FACING IMPERIAL VALLEY AGRICULTURE.

W. IRWIN

## IMPERIAL COUNTY MEDICAL SOCIETY

January 15, 1960

Members of the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and the Senate Interim Committee on Agriculture:

Allow me to express my gratitude as the official representative of the Imperial County Medical Society for the opportunity to appear here today. Despite the fact that the members of my society are responsible for virtually all the medical care of the Mexican National both on and off the job we have seldom, and then only in token fashion, been either consulted or included in the planning of this care. Moreover, the responsibility and work attendant on such care has almost universally been on physical and financial terms thrust upon us rather than negotiated with us.

As taxpayers and citizens, in addition to physicians, we recognize the importance and dependence of our vast agricultural economy on a large, healthy and satisfied pool of readily available field labor. Currently, as well as for many years, most of this labor has been supplied by foreign workers imported to and housed in this county. During that time his total health is our responsibility and we are willing to accept it on equitable and fair terms. It has only been since 1953 that his care off the job has been attempted on a uniform insurance basis rather than catch as catch can. Such an approach is sound and equitable in practice. What problems organized medicine has with the care of the Mexican agricultural laborer are inherent in this latter aspect. These problems in brief are these:

That in the past we have not had the opportunity to negotiate with the farmer and the insurance carrier.



The care of the Mexican National has been a willing or unwilling responsibility of the doctor. However, compensation has been on terms forced upon us.

The care of the Mexican National has been often a temporary or stop gap type of care without the right to or compensation for continuing care of his illness.

Some Nationals who appear to have preexisting illnesses or who have chronic illnesses which may or may not have occurred in this country are deported or their care has been taken from the doctor.

Authorization for hospitalization is sometimes difficult to obtain because the insurance company office and clinics have specific hours. Illness and accidents know no time and frequently occur after hours. There are many instances where the limitations on the amount of benefits for X-Ray, laboratory and drugs are inadequate.

Therefore, total off duty medical care is needed.

Doctors as a whole recognize their responsibility to the community for medical care. Such responsibility not only includes resident members but those who find themselves in the community by reason of employment.

When the individual is in the community for reasons of employment only, the responsibility for his medical care should be jointly assumed by the farmer, his insurance carrier and medical society. This we feel can be adequately accomplished by a three party negotiation.

Presently we find ourselves caring for these Mexican Nationals on terms forced upon us at a rate below our community standard.

Respectfully submitted,

Willis R. Irwin, M. D., President  
Imperial County Medical Society



Office of  
County Superintendent of Schools  
Imperial County

December 31, 1959

Mr. Andrew W. Oppmann, Jr.  
Executive Secretary  
Senate Fact Finding Committee on  
Labor and Welfare  
413 State Capitol  
Sacramento 14, California

Dear Mr. Oppmann:

After talking with Dr. Ray W. Johnson, Superintendent of Schools of Riverside County yesterday in connection with your letter informing us of the hearing in El Centro on January 15, 1960, to be conducted by the Senate Fact Finding Committee on Labor and Welfare on farm labor problems in the "Desert Area" we agreed that one of his staff members would attend the hearing with me to give what brief testimony we have and answer any questions if that meets with your approval.

In answer to your specific questions, very few school youths, if any school youths, work on farms unless they are members of farm families and we have done nothing through this office to encourage and/or facilitate farm employment for them. I was not aware that that was a part of my job as County Superintendent of Schools. During the war when farm labor was very scarce, we tried taking crews of high school boys and girls out on Saturdays to do farm labor. It was not very satisfactory and the idea was soon abandoned.

The problems which we once had, caused from the influx of migratory families, have practically disappeared since the farmers changed the method of packing lettuce and brought in Mexican National labor.

It would be possible for me to give more details in explanation of the paragraph above, however, I am sure you will have the Mexican labor problem explained to you in detail by experts who work with it at first hand.

We do not wish to seem disinterested in these problems, but since they are not now, in our opinion, major school problems in our area, we cannot be of much help in securing the facts about them ~~the problems~~.

Very truly yours,

Olin R. Gresham  
County Superintendent of Schools

ORG/mla

D. FISHER



My name is Dana Fisher, and I am a farmer in the Palo Verde Valley.

The Palo Verde Valley is a long, narrow agricultural valley of some 120,000 acres. It is flanked on the north by the Parker Valley, which consists of approximately 240,000 acres, and to the south by the Cibola Valley, consisting of some 15,000 acres. Both of the neighboring valleys lie in the State of Arizona, and are also agricultural in nature. Both draw upon the Palo Verde Valley for agricultural labor. All of these valleys are quite isolated. The city of Parker lies some 120 miles from its county seat, and the city of Blythe is some 190 miles from the county seat of Riverside.

The population of the Palo Verde Valley is approximately 13,500. No reliable estimates of the permanent domestic work force can be obtained.

The Palo Verde Valley is primarily dependent upon agriculture. It is reliably estimated that the non-farm income was approximately \$8,000,000 during 1958. Farm income, including livestock during the same period was approximately \$34,000,000.

The permanent domestic agricultural labor force is almost adequate to meet the demands for tractor drivers, equipment operators, and other such technically trained persons. By supplementation, largely from Arizona, these positions are kept nearly in balance, although extreme shortages occur in the summer months. In regard to "stoop labor", and other forms of physical labor, the domestic supply is almost non-existent. Short as the labor supply has been, it is getting shorter each year. In 1958, the California Farm Labor Office made 22,114 referrals in the desert area of Riverside County. In 1959 only 14,739 referrals were made. This is a decrease of some 34% in a twelve month period. The local Farm Labor Office informs me that during December there were only some ten to twelve people per day who wanted work, and that only some ten percent of these would work at farm labor. This same office informs me that during October and November, the cooler months for cotton picking, there were only about 150 domestic cotton pickers in the cotton fields of the entire Palo Verde Valley.

I am attaching to this statement a breakdown of referrals, of domestic labor, to the farmers of this area. This breakdown includes the months of November through February, and June and July 1958. Shown in the breakdown is the fact that during this six month period there were 462 referrals. Ninety three of these referrals never showed up at the ranches to which they were sent. One hundred ninety one worked for one week or less. Sixty five worked for a period of up to two weeks, while one hundred thirteen worked for a period longer than two weeks. Two of the referrals were still working at the time of the survey. It is quite obvious from the survey that domestic labor does not provide any considerable degree of continuity nor security.

The local labor associations in the Palo Verde Valley advertise in the local paper for farm labor. This is supplemented by advertising over the local radio station by individual farmers from time to time.

The money question of wages does not necessarily enter into the problem of availability of labor. The Palo Verde Hospital pays considerably more to its technical personnel than is paid in adjacent areas. Because of the isolation of Blythe it is always exceedingly difficult to obtain replacements in these technical fields, regardless of quality. This also holds true in regard to our school district, etc.

It has been my policy, as well as that of most farmers with whom I have discussed the matter, to offer jobs to any domestic worker, should he or she be referred by the State Office or not. My experience with these workers has been very disappointing. I have not found them to be steady workers.

I have often wondered about the desirability of having domestic workers fill our temporary position in agriculture. It has seemed to me that it is desirable to root our citizens in a community insofar as this is possible. In checking this matter I talked with the Chief of Police of the City of Blythe. He stated that law enforcement had become much easier now that there were fewer domestic transient agricultural workers. All phases of law enforcement had become easier with the advent of the Mexican National program. The officials of the Palo Verde Unified School District stated that it is much easier to run the school system without as many transients coming through our community. It was stated by the school officials that the children of the transients could not adjust educationally nor psychologically, and thus created a considerable problem in the classroom. In addition the reduction of transient children during the winter months meant that the <sup>NEED FOR</sup> school building was much reduced. The officials of our hospital board state much the same thing. It is much easier for them to provide adequate hospital care without the large numbers of transients passing through the community. I am sure that these same factors hold true in other agricultural communities. It would seem that when the various agricultural communities are benefited by a reduction in the number of transient domestics, and when these same transients apparently become better citizens when rooted in a community that it would be somewhat foolish to encourage more transient domestics unless there existed a condition of unemployment in adjacent areas.

BLYTHE GROWERS, INC.

1958 DOMESTIC REFERRALS FOR THE MONTH OF NOVEMBER

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Clyde Cooley	Did not show up for work
Mike Peternell	" " " " " "
Ray Baskett	" " " " " "
Herman Meyer	" " " " " "
Nichole Harris	Worked 3 hours and quit
Frank Coto	Did not show up for work
Leroy Mead	Worked 43½ hours and quit
Clayton S. Rose	Did not show up for work
Ray Reynolds	" " " " " "
R. B. HAYES	" " " " " "
Jose Angel Rodriguez	" " " " " "
Raul Rodriguez	" " " " " "
George Crawford	" " " " " "
Jim Braslesrs	" " " " " "
Don Franklin	" " " " " "
Gabriel Infante Leja	" " " " " "
Francisco Gonzalez	" " " " " "
Frank Seales	Worked 12 hours and quit
Clyde Cooley	" " " " " "
Eliseo Espinoza	" 16½ " " "
D. T. Duncon	Did not show up for work
Joe Lujan	" " " " " "
Alonso Lobato	" " " " " "
Ed Phipps	" " " " " "
David Hanker	" " " " " "
Jim McCoy	" " " " " "
Andrew Sexton	" " " " " "
Wade Orr	" " " " " "
Paul Hayes	" " " " " "
Jim Hayes	" " " " " "

BLYTHE GROWERS, INC.

1958 DOMESTIC REFFERALS FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
John Perkey	Did not show up for work
Boyd Hamlett	" " " " " "
Jim Gomez	Worked 6 hours and quit
Andy Calvin	" " " " " "
H. B. Smotherman	Did not show up for work
J. H. Billingsley	Worked 26 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours and quit
Roy Hall	Did not show up for work
Paul Gibson	Still Working
Hemp Williams	Worked 6 hours and quit
Robert Spencer	Did not show up for work
Joe Toon	" " " " " "
Joseph Fierro	" " " " " "
Evaristo Mireles	" " " " " "
Kenneth Lenz	Worked 12 hours and quit
Sandy Moore	Did not show up for work
J. W. Cole	" " " " " "
Earl Holmes	" " " " " "
J. W. Galloway	Worked 50 hours and quit
Bob Tullos	Did not show up for work
David Bunch	" " " " " "
Bugie Hastings	" " " " " "
Ray Bunch	" " " " " "
Ronald Adler	" " " " " "



ELYTHE GROWERS, INC.

1958 DOMESTIC REFERRELS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY

NAME	REMARKS
Jose garoyoki	Worked 6 days and quit
Andres Sanchez	" 6 " " "
Alfredo Favela	" 2 " " "
Fernando Torres	" 2 " " "
Patricio Gonzalez	" " " " "
T. Federico	" 6 " " "
Juan Cota	" 7 " " "
Pete Sanchez	" " " " "
Jose Grasoyoke	" " " " "
Andres Sanchez	" " " " "
Ramon Favela	" 4 " " "
Octaviano Rodriguez	" 2 " " "
Fernando Torres	" 1 " " "
Patricio Garaka	" 7 " " "
T. Federico	" 2 " " "
J. Duarte	" 1 " " "
E. Caldera	" " " " "
Juan Cota	" 6 " " "
Pete Aguirre	" 5 " " "
Bernardo Torres	" " " " "
Tomas Federico	" " " " "
G. Rodriguez	" " " " "
Pablo Valenzuela	" " " " "
Ramon Favela.	" " " " "
Pilar Reyes	" 3 " " "
Patricio Gonzalez	" 15 " " "
Alfredo Davela	" 6 " " "
Andres Sanchez	" 7 " " "
Jose Gereke	" 9 " " "
Pete Sanchez	" 4 " " "
Sesario Soto	" 6 " " "
Charles Hooker	Did Not Show Up For Work
Clare Kichee	" " " " "
M. Garibay	Worked 21 days and quit One day only
H. L. Thomas	<del>xxxxxx 24 months xxxxxxxx</del> worked 24 days and quit
Don Bates	" 2 1/2 Months " " (2 1/2 Months)
A. B. Morales	" " " " "
Joe Sundes	" " " " "
Nacho Macias	" " " " "
Robert Soto	" " " " "
Manuel Soto Jr.	" " " " "
Purnell Carpenter	" " " " "
George Cumbie	" " " " "
John Bacon	" " " " "
Ofimiano Jinzo	" " " " "
Chester Manley	" " " " "
Gabriel Robles	" " " " "

NAMEREMARKSJanuary, 1958

Angel Sierra	Worked	2½	Months and quit		
Don Bates	"	"	"	"	"
A. B. Morales	"	"	"	"	"
Joe Sundes	"	"	"	"	"
Angel Soto	"	"	"	"	"
Elias Lopez	"	2¼	"	"	"
Claud Davies	"	2½	"	"	"
Richard Landtroop	"	2	"	"	"
Onia Robertson	"	9	days	"	"
Levi Findley	"	14	"	"	"
Louis Rodriguez	"	1	"	"	"
Jose Penaloza	"	14	"	"	"
Mariano Gonzalez	"	1	"	"	"
Crespin Castillo	"	7	"	"	"
Luis Rodriguez	"	2	"	"	"
Manuel Gonzales	"	5	"	"	"
E. C. Espinoza	"	3	"	"	"
C. M. Valencia	"	9	"	"	"
Charles Cardell	"	6	"	"	"
Lawrence Sawyer	"	"	"	"	"
O. E. Hopkins	"	1½	Months	"	"
L. B. Mesimetal	"	11	days	"	"
E. Guzman	"	"	"	"	"
M. Guerro	"	"	"	"	"
Joe Madrid	"	"	"	"	"
Elias Guerro	"	"	"	"	"
D. Villaspico	"	"	"	"	"
Jose Castro	"	"	"	"	"
F. Mendoza	"	"	"	"	"
F. Cardona	"	"	"	"	"
D. Larra	"	"	"	"	"
Juan Marquez	"	"	"	"	"
Tony Mata	"	"	"	"	"
E. R. Castro	"	"	"	"	"
F. Catresco	"	"	"	"	"
Y. Salazar	"	"	"	"	"
J. Jimenez	"	"	"	"	"
R. A. Gonzalez	"	"	"	"	"
Manuel Gonzalez	"	"	"	"	"
B. R. Dominguez	"	7	"	"	"
M. G. Salitena	"	"	"	"	"
C. Perez	"	"	"	"	"
F. M. Garcia	"	"	"	"	"
A. Delgado	"	"	"	"	"
W. Rivera	"	"	"	"	"
R. Castilo	"	"	"	"	"
E. C. Esparza	"	"	"	"	"
Tony Cota	"	7	"	"	"
Faustino Villa	"	2	Months	"	"
Florencia Benitez	"	"	"	"	"

## NAME

## REMARKS

JANUARY, 1958

Pilar Reyes	Worked 28 days and quit
Mack Hampton	" 5 " " "
D. G. Cavazos	" 1 " " "
Crescencio Caballero	" 7 " " "
Jim Botten	" 22 " " "
J. E. Rhea	" 1 1/4 Months 2" "
Ben Gonzalez	Did Not Show up for Work
Melvin Allen	" 1 1/2 Months " "
Alden Burton	" 1 " " "
Leslie Carter	" 1 days " "
Ralph Robertson	" 4 " " "
Charles Smith	" 2 " " "
M Guerro	" 7 " " "
Joe Castro	" " " " "
Elias Guerro	" " " " "
Elena Castro	" " " " "
Tony Mata	" " " " "
R. F. Pacheco	" " " " "
P. F. Pacheco	" " " " "
M. F. Pacheco	" " " " "
E. Guzman	" " " " "
M. Simentiel	" " " " "
Luis Biaz	" " " " "
R. Garcia	" " " " "
J. Agundez	" " " " "
Frank Fierro	" " " " "
E. Dominguez	" " " " "
I. Herro	" " " " "
R. T. Gutierrez	" " " " "
S. F. Avela	" " " " "
F. Mendoza	" " " " "
Isaac Garcia	" " " " "
James Griffin	" 7 " " "
Henry Sperry	" 2 " " "
A. S. Sperry, Jr.	" " " " "
Robert Watkins	" 4 " " "
F. J. Watts	" 7 " " "
Henry Spivey	" 1 " " "
S. B. Sprivey	" " " " "
Robert Watkins	" " " " "
James Wholirey	" 2 " " "
Jose Christension	Did not show up for work
D. L. Kelley	" " " " "
Rockey Swann	" " " " "
<del>Charles D. Swann</del>	
Jack Merrill	Worked 3 Months and quit
Joe J. Gallagher	" 1 1/2 " " "
Ralph Alspaugh	" " " " "
Charlie Bise	" " " " "
Gregoris Torres	" " " " "
Rafael Rics	" " " " "
Leon Reed	" " " " "
Pete Obeso Jr.	" 9 hours " "

NameRemarksJANUARY, 1958

Bill Henry	Worked 7 days and quit
Jesus Rios	" " " " "
Tom Henry	" " " " "
William R. Huff	" 1 " " "
George Carson	" 3 " " "
Miguel Samaniego	Still Working
Buster Herbert	" 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Month " "
Dee Kelley	" " " " "
A. R. Echard	" " " " "
Nolan Wagner	" " " " "
Armando Dominguez	Refused to work
Bernie Dominguez	" " "
Bennie Dominguez	" " "



BLYTHE GROWERS, INC.

1958 DOMESTIC REFERRELS FOR THE MONTH ~~EO~~ FEBRUARY

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Octaviano Rodriguez	Worked 5 days and quit
Ben Rodriguez	" " " " "
Antonio Rodriguez	" " " " "
Lionel Rodriguez	" " " " "
Juan Torres	" 3 " " "
Bernardo Torres	" 1 " " "
Julian Lopez	" 6 " " "
Jesus Fernandez	" 5 " " "
R. SeFridge	" 11 " " "
Ben Rodriguez	" 1 " " "
R. S. Garcia	" " " " "
C. Rogues	" 2 Months " "
J. Lugo	" 1 day " "
L. Teniente	" 9 " " "
T. Marez	" 3 " " "
C. Perez	" 3 Weeks " "
M. Navarro	" # " " "
L. Martinez	" 8 days " "
E. Aquiniga	" 3 weeks " "
M. G. Saldana	" 15 days " "
J. J. Maldonado	" 3 weeks " "
J. Jimenez	" 1 day " "
F. Carrasco	" " " " "
E. Guerra	" 2 " " "
Y. Salazar	" 1 " " "
R. Inzuza	" 7 " " "
G. F. Gonzalez	" 1 " " "
R. T. Gutierrez	" " " " "
D. Lara	" 8 " " "
David Arreguin	" 1 " " "
P. R. Dominguez	" 3 weeks " "
G. Villereal	" " " " "
W. Rivas	" " " " "
M. Ruiz	" " " " "
J. M. Garcia	" " " " "
P. Ochoa	" 1 day " "
E. Ochoa	" " " " "
J. Madrid	" 2 " " "
Oscar Hancock	Did not show up for work
J. Madrid	Worked 1 day and quit
L. Salas	" " " " "
C. Cardoza	" 3 weeks " "
J. L. Arriaga	" 2 " " "
C. Delgado	" 3 " " "
L. Gonzalez	" 1 Month " "
M. Yribe	" 1 day " "
E. Villa	" " " " "
E. C. Espinoza	" " " " "

NAMEREMARKSFEBRUARY, 1958

L. Gavan	Worked 12 days and quit
R. Jimenez	" " " " "
E. Guerrero	" 3 weeks " "
M. Araujo	" 1 day " "
Robert Pierce	" 3 weeks " "
C. Teneinte	" 1 day " "
E. Reyes	" " " " "
Y. Avillar	" " " " "
E. O. Flores	" " " " "
Ed M. Flores	" " " " "
J. Reyna	" 10 " " "
M. Contreras	" 12 " " "
E. Ramirez	" " " " "
M. Castro	" 15 " " "
P. Fernandez	" 4 " " "
V. Martinez	" 12 " " "
J. E. Martinez	" " " " "
M. Chaves	" " " " "
E. Castro	" 5 " " "
J. Castro	" 11 " " "
P. Hernandez	" 8 " " "
L. Galvan	" " " " "
E. Ramirez	" 11 " " "
M. Contreras	" 3 weeks " "
V. Martinez	" 10 days " "
A. Patterson	Did not show up for work
Jonathan Simpson	" " " " " "
Jack Sissel	" " " " " "
Ed Perez	" " " " " "
<del>Ricardo Gomez</del>	
Alfred Rivera	Worked 1 Month and quit
D. Fredrick	" 11 days and quit
R. Churchill	" " " " "
S. R. Williams	" 10 " " "
H. S. Estep	" " " " "
J. E. Bryson	" 14 " " "
J. D. Philpat	" " " " "
Bob Tharon	" " " " "
Wesley Woodhill	" " " " "
L. L. Flud	" " " " "
Manuel Ibarra	" 9 " " "
Gandeliro Montes	" " " " "
C. L. Pittman	" 2 " " "
J. T. Lill	" " " " "
Mick Castro	
Jesus Serna	
Robert Haley	Worked 10 days and quit
Leon Jackson	" 1 " " "
Alton McAnally	" 3 " " "
Lester Willh	Refused to work in field
Henry Brooks	" " " " "
James Whurley	Worked 2 days and quit

NAMEREMARKSFEBRUARY, 1958

Gene Kelley	Worked 3 weeks and quit
R. H. Collins	" 2 days " "
Alvin Haynans	Did not show up for work
Victor Moore	" " " " " "
Domingo Kavaca	Worked 1 Month and quit
Ray Strong	Did not show up for work
Mack Hampton	Worked 1 Month and quit
Tony Spencer	Did not show up for work
B. J. Whitehead	Worked 2 days and quit
Gilbert Sutton	
BertoWillians	Did not show up for work
Charles Henson	Worked 1 Month and quit
Jose Mendez	" 3 weeks " "
Gilberto Mirando	" 3 days " "
William Harrison	" " " " "
Arthur Garney	
Gwin Griffin	" 1 month " "
M. G. Favil	" " " " "
Jack Overturf	" 1 day " "
Tony Soto	" 13 " " "
R. Hernandez	" " " " "
M. Cano	" " " " "
Jesus Romero	" " " " "
B. S. Orduno	" " " " "
R. Hernandez	" " " " "
R. Cano	" " " " "
Homer Estep	" 3 days " "
C. H. Grey	" 1 month " "
J. R. Jenkins	" 7 days " "
Carl Fields	" 1 " " "
John Gladney	" 3 " " "
Lee Venable	" 1 " " "
Francis S. Watts	" " " " "
Casimiro Tayofa	" " " " "
Lee Mo Walker	" " " " "
Stanley Williams	" " " " "
R. Tisdall	" 1 1/2 Months " "
Bob Ruesgo	
Jose Alvarez	Worked 1 month and quit
Louis Gonzalez	" 1 1/2 " " "
Ray Estep	" " " " "
Edward Oelark	" " " " "
J. M. Garcia	" 1 " " "
W. Rivas	" " " " "
M. Ruiz	" " " " "
P. R. Dominguez	" " " " "
L. Martinez	" " " " "
E. Aguiniga	" " " " "
M. G. Saldera	" " " " "
Jose L. Arreaga	" " " " "
C. Delgado	" " " " "
E. Flores	" " " " "
C. Cardoza	" " " " "

NAMEREMARKSFEBRUARY 1958

Guadalupe Valenzuela	Worked	8	days	and	quit
Rosendo Munoz	"	9	"	"	"
Manuel Sanchez	"	1	"	"	"
Rosendo Munoz	"	6	hours	"	"
L. Huerta	"	5	days	"	"
Israel Perez	"	4	"	"	"
Jose Sotelo	"	"	"	"	"
Martin Castro	"	"	"	"	"
Alberto Romero	"	5	"	"	"
Benito Angulo	"	1	"	"	"
Asencio Halguin	"	13	"	"	"



NAMEREMARKSFEBRUARY, 1958

NAME	REMARKS
Sidney Mathews	Worked 1 month and quit
Leroy Lavelace	" " " " "
Elias Guerro	" " " " "
Isreal Perez	" " " " "
Bill Pation	" " " " "
Frank Smith	" " " " "
D. J. Whitehead	"/ " " " "
Horold Goodson	" " " " "
Karl Menger	" " " " "
J. R. Sanchez	" 4 days " "
R. Garcia	" " " " "
J. Urias	" " " " "
J. Martinez	" 6 weeks " "
E. Aguiniga	" " " " "
Y. Salazar	" " " " "
R. Aguiniga	" " " " "
F. Carrasco	" " " " "
S. L. Pena	" " " " "
J. Jimenez	" 4 days " "
P. Valenzuela	" 4 weeks " "
R. Castillo	" " " " "
E. Castro	" " " " "
Boyd Smith	" 1 " " "
Stanley Williams	" " " " "
David Arreguin	" 1 day " "
Al Berna	" 2 " " "
E. Castro	" 3 " " "
Ricardo Biaster	" 2 " " "
Pedro Reyes	" " " " "
F. E. BELO	" 1 1/2 " " "
R. W. Harell	" 1 " " "
F. Cicresco	" " " " "
A. A. Delgado	" 2 " " "
Salvador Lopez	" " " " "
Hector Rangel	" " " " "
Y. Salazar	" 1 " " "
Al Huerta	" 2 " " "
Elias Espinoza	" 6 hours " "
Ernesto Elias	" 4 " " "
Guadalupe Valenzuela	" 12 " " "
A. C. Olguin	" " " " "
Merced Uelas	" 2 days " "
Rosendo Enos	" " " " "
Carlos Cueska	" " " " "
Rafael Ysanaga	" " " " "
F. Favela	" " " " "
A. Delgado	" 1 " " "
Alberto Romero	" 7 " " "
Salvador Lopez	" 1 " " "
Martin Castro	" 8 " " "
Alberto Romero	" " " " "
Asencio Halguin	" " " " "
Jose Valencia	" " " " "

BLYTHE GROWERS, INC.

1958 DOMESTIC REFERRALS FOR THE MONTH OF JUNE

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
L. B. Wilmore	Did Not show up for work
Leroy Joseph	" " " " " "
Joe Bell	" " " " " "
Luther Kimble	" " " " " "
Jerry Harrison	" " " " " "
Dalton Jackson	" " " " " "
Steve Harrison	" " " " " "
Raymond Willis	Worked 16½ hours and quit
Chester Mansburger	Did Not show up for work
Carl Hailings	" " " " " "
Joe Carpio	" " " " " "
Ricardo Salagado	" " " " " "
Gordon Netzbarger	" " " " " "
Robert Bezting	" " " " " "
Frank Lyman	" " " " " "
L. Blumhoeter	" " " " " "
Jay Green	" " " " " "
David Holt	" " " " " "
James C. Owens	" " " " " "
Lawson C. Hamilton	Worked 2 days and quit
James H. Williams	" " " " " "
David Tophia	Did not show up for work
Arthur Brown	" " " " " "
Henry Walker	" " " " " "
Eldndge Edwards	Worked 24 hours and quit
Carl B. Hailings	" 108½ " " "
Chester Mansburger	Did not show up for work
Eddie Lee Riles	Worked 57½ hours and quit
J. R. Sides	" 5 " " "
Robert Stephenson	" " " " " "
David Bunch	Did not show for work
George Schminkey	Worked 3½ hours and quit
Rockey Riddles	" " " " " "
Ernest Goodson	Did not show up for work
Louis Scott	" " " " " "
Raymond Kilmer	Worked 7 days and quit
Charles Hahn	" " " " " "
Larry Sager	" " " " " "
Henry Jackson	Did not show up for work
Charlie Lackey	" " " " " "
Thomas Reed	" " " " " "
Ernest Stone	" " " " " "

BLYTHE GROWERS, INC.

1958 DOMESTIC REFERRALS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY

<u>NAME</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
Calistro Triste	Worked 3 hours and quit
Richard Brown	" 2 " " "
Jessie Welo	" 2 weeks " "
Francisco E. Miranda	Did not show up for work
Leonel Miranda	Worked 2 weeks and quit
Richard Kelley	" 1½ months and quit

R. E. WEIDNER



January 4, 1960

Senate Fact Finding Committee  
on Labor and Welfare  
413 State Capitol  
Sacramento 14, California

Gentlemen:

We have just received indirectly the notice of your hearing in El Centro on Friday, January 15.

I would like to testify at your hearing, but do not have a registration form to fill out. I do enclose nine copies of this letter.

Our company has two major endeavors. The first is production of foliage plants that are shipped all over the United States. Secondly we have lemons, oranges, and grapefruits. We have become interested in developing both endeavors in the Imperial Valley. We are at present planting citrus trees on our land in Imperial County, and have raised horticultural products successfully there.

We are interested in producing certain kinds of foliage plants in Imperial Valley because we fear the urbanization of Orange County indicates a move in the future.

In the production of foliage plants in Imperial Valley, it is necessary to build a structure that will carry Saran cloth to shade the plants from intense sun. We have been informed that such a shade house falls under the category of "shed".

We are desirous of getting such a classification changed, because we feel this shade is as essential a part of the cultivation of these plants as water and fertilizer.

If we are to develop this project as far as we would like to do, we would need the assurance of being able to use "Bracero" labor.

We do subscribe to the desirability of using United States citizens as long as they are available, and especially if they are competent and dependable.

We do not feel, however, that it would be wise to develop this project if we have no hope of using Braceros under emergency conditions.

We feel our work is of immense value to California because our products are shipped in the main to the East and North.

We appreciate the opportunity of presenting this plea to you and would like to gain the opportunity of testifying before you.

Sincerely,

BUENA PARK GREENHOUSES, INC.

R. E. WEIDNER  
President

(Signed)

REW:ms